# श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

# THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Original Stanzas-Split up Reading-Transliteration-Word for Word Translation - a Lucid English Rendering and Commentary

BY

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प्रज्ञान ब्रह्म

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# THE PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Tamil version of this book was first published in 1951. Since then it continues increasingly popular ~ong the Tamil-knowing public. The eighth tion of 10,000 copies is now on sale.

A request came to the author from several quarters that his Tamil commentary on the Bhagavad Gita might also be rendered into English for the benefit of the larger non-Tamil-knowing public. He has responded to the request and therefore we are enabled to bring out this English version. In order to cater for an extensive demand in India, we have chosen to sell it at a nominal price much less than the actual cost Three impressions of 10,000 copies each were sold at Rs. 6-00. Due to steady raise of the price of paper, the price of the succeeding impressions were raised to Rs. 7/- and Rs. 7/50. Now for the same reason we are constrained to sell the sixth impression at Rs. 9/-.

Those who have a missionary zeal for spreading the message of the Gita, are invited to co-operate with us in this holy service.

# प्रस्तावना

## INTRODUCTION

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### The Scriptural Trinity

Scriptures are indispensable to all religions. They save religions from mutation and from extinction. That faith which has no gospel for its guidance gets lost in a series of transformations. Finally it disintegrates and loses its individuality. But a faith that draws sanction and inspiration from a sacred book is able to hold its own. It has in such a holy document authoritative statements to encounter the opposition and meet the attacks of the heterodox. All the religions of the world that have endured the ravages of time and of transformation have their own scriptures for anchorage. That the Bible is the scripture of the Christians is well known even to those beyond the pale of the Christendom. The Qur-aan remains ever associated with the followers of the Islamic religion. The scripture of the Buddhist is the sacred collection of all the enlightened utterances of the Buddha, known as the Dammapada. The followers of all the other important religions may also be said to be more familiar with their sacred

books than with their kith and kin. But the case of the Hindu is different. Among the followers of different paths, he alone is bewildered in regard to this question. He does not know which book he may term his scripture. If a mention is made of the Vedas he confesses he has never had occasion to see or handle such books as these, let alone the question of getting acquainted with their contents. Many a Hindu, may mention with some hesitance this or that as the sacred book from which he draws inspiration and guidance. But one who is widely read in the Hindu lore wavers before making a pronouncement of this kind. This dilemma is due to the immensity of the Hindu scriptures. The popular conviction is that the Vedas are the direct or indirect sources of all the sacred books pertaining to Hinduism. Several portions of the Vedas are said to have become extinct in the march of time. But the cream of the Vedas is the Upanishads, and these have been piously guarded both against extinction and mutilation. All the systems of philosophy in India derive their inspiration and authority from these Upanishads. They are also called the Forest Books because of the environment in which they became revealed to the sages, popularly known as Rishis. A synopsis and classification of the contents of the Upanishads goes by the name of the Brahma Sutras or the Vedanta Sutras. These Sutras are aphorisms elucidating the Vedanta Philosophy. These aphorisms are somewhat abstruse and unintelligible. Without a commentary it is rather difficult to follow them. But the position of the third book called the Bhagavad Gita

is different It is the essence of the Upanishads, not in the sense that it is all condensed into terse form, but in the sense that the Vedanta Philosophy is made easy of understanding When the Upanishads are compared to cows, the Bhagavad Gita takes the position of their milk When one has plenty of milk at one's disposal one need not undergo the laborious task of maintaining cows One who has studied and understood the Bhagavad Gita may be said to have caught the cardinal teachings of the Upanishads

These three books, namely the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita are called the Scriptural Trinity-*Prasthanatrayam* They constitute the final authority on scriptural matters There is no conflict of views among these three The elucidation of the ultimate Reality and the means of realizing It are categorically stated in these books If a question is raised as to which is the scriptural authority in Hinduism, the answer is this trinity There is not a single cardinal point in Hinduism that is not touched in these books Elaborate treatment of particular aspects of spirituality such as Bhakti and Yoga may be found in other books. But they are mere explanations of what are pithily *stated in the Scriptural Trinity* If ever a conflict arises between the statements in the *Prasthanatrayam* and other sacred books, the verdict of the former alone is traditionally accepted as final

**Enshrined in the Mahabharata**

The Mahabharata or the Great Epic is held to be the fifth Veda The Bhagavad Gita finds a place

in this stupendous record of human activities, aspirations and achievements. Chapters twenty-five to forty-two of the Bhishma Parva constitute this immortal discourse. It contains, therefore, eighteen chapters. The verses number seven hundred. Among modern scholars there are those who hold that the Bhagavad Gita is an interpolation in the Mahabharata. But the internal evidence does not bear any testimony to this contention. Both in diction and in development of the subject there is homogeneity running all through. The philosophy of the Gita explained and expanded becomes the Mahabharata. Conversely, Mahabharata condensed into philosophy becomes Gita. What the heart is to the human body, the Gita is to this Great Epic. So any attempt to trace a separate origin to the Song Celestial serves no purpose.

#### God's grace *versus* Earthly Power

The period of exile was over for the Pandavas. They had faithfully fulfilled all the hard terms imposed on them for the sin of gambling. They were now entitled to get back the extensive empire legitimately belonging to them. But the covetous Kaurava cousins bluntly refused to part with even an inch of land. Sri Krishna, the universally revered One, came to intervene as a mediator. He, the impartial One, pleaded with the Kauravas to be fair to the heirs-apparent to the throne. He even reminded them of the deadly consequences of a ruthless war if it should ensue. But greed born of blindness and covetousness would not see eye to eye with fairness. Persuading

the usurpers to take time and reconsider, Sri Krishna, the well-wisher of all, returned to Dwaraka, his capital.

Conciliation seemed well nigh impossible. Vigorous mobilization started on either side. Finally, the rivals had recourse to the very Person who came to mediate. Being omniscient Sri Krishna could know that they were both hastening to seek his help. In his turn he hastened to stage a setting befitting the occasion. In his bed chamber he posed a slumber. A solitary chair was placed behind his head. Arjuna was the first to enter. He could have occupied that seat; but he did not do so. He preferred to stand reverentially beside the Lord's feet until he woke up. Duryodhana, the head of the uncompromising Kauravas, appeared next. With characteristic arrogance he occupied the vacant chair. Now Sri Krishna woke up. It was but natural that his eyes should fall first on Arjuna. Then followed an eventful conversation between them, in which help was promised to the Pandavas. The presence of Duryodhana in the chamber was then made known to the Lord who was still in a reclining posture on the cot. He sat up, turned round and welcomed that sworn enemy of the Pandavas. In his turn Duryodhana also sought help from Kesava. Strangely enough he was also assured help. Sri Krishna's entire manpower and material resources were placed on one side, and he himself unarmed offered to be on the other side. Now the belligerent brothers were allowed to choose between the two, each according

to his inclination.Arjuna's choice fell on Sri Krishna, solitary and unarmed though he was. Now the other applicant breathed a sigh of relief because he could get exactly what he wanted. He believed entirely in armament and mobilization; whereas Arjuna and his brothers subordinated power of arms and prowess of man to God's grace. The consequences of these differing choices are too well known to require elucidation. Those who believed exclusively in the sinews of war and in earthly possessions perished along with them. But those who surrendered themselves to the will of God and acted for His glory gained both the here and the hereafter.

### Life beset with Problems

Until he made his appearance on the battle-field Arjuna was actually panting for a deadly encounter with the wicked. He was erstwhile a stranger to doubts and despair. Just as an arrow darts through a cobweb, he had easily waded through several meshes in life. The calibre he was made of knew no problem that could not be solved. Even the combat that he was once obliged to have with Mahadeva, the Great God was no strain to him. Vijaya or born-conqueror as he was, he was wont to take all issues easy. He had not for a moment stopped to ponder over the consequences of the impending dreadful war. His conviction was that the man who dared to oppose him opposed righteousness itself. Impatiently he asked Sri Krishna to drive his car in between the two arrayed armies so that he might have a glance at those who were on the side of the

sinful war-mongers. The unswerving Charioteer took this opportunity to put to test the valour as well as the power of understanding of this accredited 'bull among men.' He drove the chariot just in front of Bhishma the grandsire and Drona the revered preceptor. They were both, till then, persons worthy of veneration to Arjuna. Was it possible to switch on to a counter attitude at a moment's notice? Arjuna was between the horns of a dilemma. He became perplexed. To fight or to flee was the question which he could not decide. Life always bristles with problems of varying magnitude. They are as incessant as waves on the sea. Individuals solve them, each according to his discernment and ability. This process of surmounting problems constitutes progress in life. But sooner or later a major crisis crops up, proving itself insurmountable. Valour and worldly wisdom are of no avail to meet it. Self-knowledge inspired by Divine Grace alone can equip a person to overcome the crisis. Arjuna, magnificently equipped as he was for the battle of life, now found himself unequal to the challenge of the situation. He was therefore now obliged to seek that enlightenment which would help him probe into the mystery of life and tide over the difficulty.

### Allegory

The Mahabharata warfare allows itself to be viewed allegorically. Laws of nature are eternal and uniform. What happens once is bound to repeat itself under similar circumstances. The Law of Incarnation of God is equally uniform. It

is not selective and solitary as some people would have it. It happens whenever and wherever a necessity arises. The entire universe, sentient and insentient, has come out of God. An Incarnation is a special manifestation of His. He bodies Himself forth as a human being in this mundane world in order to clarify the highest of the spritual and moral laws governing life. Sri Krishna's earthly career had a grandeur of its own. Through the drama of human life, He demonstrated the divine principles which are irrevocably linked with progress in life. On the battle-field of Kurukshetra human endeavours reap their corresponding results. That historic spot is itself a symbol of the human frame. Body-centred life is itself a kind of warfare. Parallel to the Pandavas and Kauravas at Kurukshetra there are the good and the bad tendencies lodged in the human structure. The teaming bad tendencies do very often out-number the good ones. Strangely enough, these good and bad tendencies are like cousins because of their common origin. Man is constitutionally a combination of good and bad inclinations. Evil habits are born of blind ignorance, whereas good inclinations originate in the whiteness of purity. Opposed to each other as they are, these two sets of tendencies try to dominate the bodily domain. The evil ones among them are ever adepts at mobilizing in their favour all possible resources of nature.

God is supremely above virtue and vice. There is no need for Him to entangle Himself in action

of any kind, good or bad He is merely the changeless Witness In His Presence activities take place in nature. Though Himself actionless, His Grace is ever in favour of the good. Sri Krishna's agreeing to be an unarmed charioteer to the Pandavas signifies this great truth Further, God is ever the Great Charioteer residing in the hearts of all. His presence as Conscience within the embodied beings is perceptible to the virtuous, but to the wicked His inner presence remains clouded.

The one great wielder of all actions in the Mahabharata warfare was Sri Krishna. The activities of all other heroes and participants put together were hardly a fraction of Sri Krishna's work. In the midst of intense activity, He remained supremely serene and unaffected The great catastrophe left no more impress in His mind than a reflection does in a mirror. Nothing in the universe could distract Him from His wonted poise For this reason He is called Achyuta by the sages The gist of His teaching is. " Fight the battle of life Let the virtue in you vanquish the vice Any useful work that falls to your lot gives you enough of opportunity for self-discipline, emulation and emancipation The Divinity within is your ever available guide Attuning yourself to It, do your job as splendidly as you can Every hero is obliged to wage the Mahabharata war in and through his own life."

### Life and Message Inseparable

Among the saviours of mankind there is an exemplary trait which is common to all. Their

life embodies the message they bring to mankind. Their precept is primarily through their personal life. What they practise in varying situations counts for everything. Their conduct is the core of their teaching. There is a belief that Sri Krishna's case does not come under this rule. The sponsors of this view contend that humanity will do well to emulate Sri Rama and Sri Krishna in two different ways. Imitate the life of the former but imbibe the instructions of the latter, dare not imitate the actions of Sri Krishna. This, in short, is their contention. But this idea is born of an imperfect understanding. Some Incarnations of God were obliged to wipe off the face of the earth thousands of wicked people. But this was an extraordinary deed under extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary actions are not uncommon even with ordinary people. Today we do witness pious individuals walking on fire unscathed. Occasionally an individual is found to bear the weight of an elephant on his body. These are out of the ordinary. It is not necessary that every man should be endowed with such unusual powers. But in these human beings endowed with exceptional powers there may be many other rare qualities which we may emulate with profit. Now the question is what particular aspect of Sri Krishna's character defies imitation. Many a puerile moralist holds that Sri Krishna's relationship with innumerable Gopis stands on an exclusive footing, and that no mortal dare copy it. In other words, he maintains that actions of this kind are sanctionable in a divine being like Sri Krishna but not in ordinary mortals

like us But this position of the pseudo-moralist arises from an imperfect understanding There is not in this episode any trace of taint which the moralist would have us behold Sri Krishna, the enchanter of the Gopis had just seen nine autumns when he had concluded his sports with the milk-maids of Brindavan Is it ever possible for a boy of eight or nine to have any kind of conjugal relationship with thousands of women? Does the plan of nature admit of such a possibility? And it must be noted that those milk-maids proved themselves faithful to the core to their husbands Those Gopis were inviting the entire lot in the township to go and join them in their mirth with the divine lad Carnality has exclusiveness as its characteristic This communion of the Gopis with Krishna is just the opposite of it

And Sri Krishna is adored as Hrishikesa The meaning of this appellation is that He is the lord of the senses We, ordinary mortals, are slaves of the senses, whereas this Divine Being had complete sway over them As long as one is body-bound and is prone to body-consciousness one cannot hope to taste supreme beatitude This was the lesson that the boy Krishna had taught the Gopis The goal of human life is to transcend body-consciousness All through his earthly career Sri Krishna was delivering this message, poised in divinity His victorious encounters with the wicked demons were extraordinary In the midst of these deeds of valour He was ever established in His Supreme Self More

through living than by precept He was delivering the message of poise to the poiseless humanity.

Wicked and sensuous rulers were in those days styled Asuras. It became imperative for Sri Krishna to do away with several of them. Every time he put an end to one of them he had perforce to give protection to a large number of women captives who were under the clutches of that villain. The deliverer of the innocent was in duty bound to give protection to thousands of the forlorn among the fair sex. His harem was thus swelling in number. He became their husband in the sense that he weaned them from moral depravity. The superhuman task that the present day Indian Government does in regard to the reclamation of abducted women gives us a glimpse into the humanitarian work that the Lord Hrishikesa had to do in those days. All living beings are, according to a religious concept, viewed as brides and the Lord as the only Bridegroom capable of espousing and guiding them. Sri Krishna literally demonstrated this position during his earthly sojourn.

### Sages Nara and Narayana

In days of yore there were two Rishis known as Narayana and Nara. Tradition has it that towards the end of the Dwapara Yuga these sages incarnated themselves as Sri Krishna and Arjuna. In both these cases they embodied in themselves the principles of the Paramatman and the Jivatman. The relationship between God and man is elucidated in several other ways, in the Upanishads. The allegory

of two birds is well known Seated on the same tree were two birds, one superior and the other ordinary. The superior one was established in its own glory The other partook of the sweet and bitter fruits in the tree, thereby subjecting itself to pleasure and pain Whenever it was overwhelmed with pain it beheld with admiration the other bird that happened to be poised in beatitude The emulation that ensued was of great consequence Every experience of bitterness drove the afflicted bird to the necessity of taking a hop towards the serene bird above As the distance between the two narrowed, its afflictions were thinning away In the proximity of the superior bird all pain was eradicated, and bliss emanated from within What was more important was that the bliss-seeking bird realized that it was merely a reflection of the bliss-emanating original one Finally the reflection got itself merged into the original *The consummation of the Jivatman in the Paramat*-man has been construed in the Upanishads in this manner The same principle is explained through the relationship that existed between Sri Krishna and Arjuna They were inseparable chums Time and again *Arjuna had a difficulty to overcome* He was also in need of something to enrich his earthly life. On all such occasions Achyuta came to his rescue. In fact He seemed indispensable to Arjuna in all matters of importance Arjuna got His guidance in education, enthusing in play, support in contests and protection while drudging in exile In all situations Sri Krishna was the friend, philosopher and guide of Arjuna He had even given away his sister Subhadra

in marriage to his friend. Finally when the great war broke out He chose to play the charioteer to His chum. It was on this momentous occasion that He imparted to his friend His supreme teaching immortalized as the Bhagavad Gita. A greater help than this could not have been rendered.

The relationship between the individual soul and the Cosmic Reality has thus been personified. Through countless births and deaths the former is a ward to the latter. Enthroned as it were in the heart of the Jivatman, the Paramatman escorts him through a series of earthly experiences. The mundane wants are appropriately supplied. The embodied soul is privileged to own all that is grand and useful. Finally ensues a crisis which puts earthly splendours to test. Pomp, power, property, pedigree and all such coveted endowments do then seem empty and purposeless. Understanding becomes clouded. Mind becomes overwhelmed with despondency. Life then seems a phantom. Sooner or later, in a greater or a smaller measure such an experience comes to every soul. There is no escape from it. Knowledge of the Supreme is the sovereign remedy in such a crisis. It is to the man of Self-knowledge that the plan and purpose of life become revealed. The basis of existence, the goal of action, the imperativeness of death—these mysteries of nature become self-evident to the man of Self-knowledge and to none else. Time was ripe for Arjuna to be enlightened on these fundamentals. Till then he had enough of worldly enjoyment and experience. Next he had to go into

the root-cause of everything. The Lord undertook to carry the Divine Light unto him.

### Intended for People of Arjuna's type

Of the five brothers Sri Krishna chose Arjuna in particular for his disciple. There was a significance in this act of His. If waging the war was the main issue there was Bhima ever thirsting for it. He was only awaiting sanction from his elder brother, Yudhishthira. If he had been called to duty he would have plunged headlong into it. On the other hand, if the issue was the vindication of righteousness, there was Yudhishthira, the very embodiment of it, who could have been made the main defender. But neither of them was chosen by the Lord. Arjuna the archer was deliberately selected for this purpose. Animal impetuosity was still dominant in Bhima. Such a man was not quite a fit agent for the practice of yoga. He would neither enquire into yoga nor translate it into action.

On the other side, a person of Yudhishthira's calibre was already fairly well established in yoga. He could well have been called a yogi. Any further enlightenment carried to him would have been a superfluity. But Arjuna's attainments stood somewhere between these two extremes. He had definitely outgrown animal propensities. At the same time he had not yet entered the domain that was divine. Only the ordinary human elements were predominant in him. In a normal man both virtue and vice are found intermingled in varying degrees. To eschew the lingering vice and to get well drilled in

the growing virtue is the purpose of life. Arjuna represented the normal man. To a person of his type the message of the Gita was bound to prove most fruitful. Any person endowed with normal human traits is competent both to study and to put into practice, the teachings of the Gita.

**Why preached on the Battle-field?**

Vedanta or Self-knowledge is born of *śānti*, peace. The Rishis of yore resided in forest retreats and made calm inquiries into the principles governing life. The Upanishads had their origin in the seclusion of the forest. But the Bhagavad Gita among the Scriptural Trinity occupies a peculiar place. It did not emanate in the woods. War front was the place of its origin. An exciting setting was deliberately chosen by the Lord. The common notion that Vedantism was concomitant with quietism was repudiated. That passivity or escape-mentality was the goal of virtuous life was given the lie. Vedanta is as much the science of action as it is the science of actionlessness. Equilibrium of mind can be had as much in a sanguinary battle-field as in the solitude of a cave. Vedanta is the sovereign science of human life at all its levels. People in every walk of life profit by putting the Vedanta philosophy to practice. The application of Vedanta energizes man and unfolds the best in him.

Sri Krishna sets an example in regard to the attitude one should assume towards one's earthly career. Long before he commenced his teens his sprightly sports at Brindavanam had all been

completed. He viewed this world as a huge playground. Life here is a delightful game. One ought to be a willing and gay participant in this play. Sri Krishna's boyish and innocent indulgences are indications of this attitude. One is expected to enter into life in the spirit in which a sportsman enters into his game. To such a person this earth is a mansion of mirth. But to him who plays his part with reluctance or disgust, this earthly career is a painful burden. This is the message of the boy Krishna of Brindavanam.

In the later part of his life he became the Kurukshetra Krishna. Then He threw light of another hue on life. Mundane existence is a veritable warfare. Nothing here on earth is achieved without a fight. He who has not learnt to wage the war of life does not inherit anything here or hereafter. The indulgent child cries to its mother for every trifling thing that it desires to own. That is a kind of battle befitting a baby. In order to secure a post or a job, a workman exhibits his talents and dexterity. That is an engagement of another pattern in the battle for existence. Building empires and strengthening them are the outcome of various kinds of warfare. Statecraft itself is a strategy in war. If man has taken a forward step in any field, it means he has successfully fought for it. Sri Krishna has himself demonstrated how to face baffling situations in life. His earthly career viewed from this angle is an endless warfare. His practice and precept go to corroborate this viewpoint. Bhagavad Gita teaches one to equip oneself for the battle of life,

Without self-preparation the warfare called life cannot be waged successfully. A battle-field like the Kurukshetra was therefore chosen as the proper pulpit for delivering this message.

**Who recorded?**

This dialogue transpired between Sri Krishna and Arjuna right on the battle-field. It was no assembly of learned men intent on intellectual or spiritual pursuit. How was it possible for anybody to get a record of this private conversation? It is but pertinent to raise a question of this type. Whenever a Divine Personality incarnates with a supreme mission in life, a talented sage also makes his appearance on earth with a holy commission. His sacred duty is to make a faithful record of the great events associated with the Divine Personality. It is only through the explanation given by the sage that the Divine Descent and Divine Sport become somewhat discernible to the man of ordinary understanding. Sage Valmiki came along with Sri Rama and expounded his exploits. Similarly Sage Vyasa accompanied Sri Krishna and drew a genuine pen picture of His earthly sojourn, thrilling as it was with miraculous events. Vyasa was endowed with unique intuitive vision. Space was no barrier between him and Sri Krishna. This sage had the spiritual potentiality to reflect the mind of Sri Krishna, the God-man. Nay, he revealed something more. He had the yoga power to bestow temporarily on Sanjaya this faculty of intuitive knowledge. Seated before Dhrtarashtra, the blind king, that fair-minded minister in his turn

accurately reported to him all that he saw and heard from the distant war front. In this manner three blessed souls simultaneously shared the privilege of partaking of the ambrosia of the Bhagavad Gita. While Arjuna was the immediate recipient, Vyasa and Sanjaya got access to it from two different places. Vyasa went on recording it while the other went on relating it to the inquisitive blind monarch. Into Dhrtarashtra's ears, however, these words of wisdom fell as empty words. Strangely enough there was in him a mental blindness to match the physical.

It will not be out of place here to point out the difference between the radio and the intuitive faculty. The function of the former is merely to catch, broadcast and reproduce the sound. Its effect is public. It is shared by all who lend their ears. Intuitive knowledge on the other hand is personal and private. All cannot share it. But it has the power to transform the experiencer into a sage. Even without the medium of language ideas can be caught by enlightened people. Vyasa had this spiritual capacity. By recording the divine message of the Lord, he has conferred a great boon on humanity.

#### Gospel of slaughter

It is possible to come across people who object to the study of the Bhagavad Gita. They hold that the dialogue was intended to drag Arjuna somehow into the carnage. Arguments had to be invented in order to justify that nefarious act. And Sri Krishna proved himself an adept in the art of making a virtue of needless killing. What ensued was a wholesale

massacre. Without compunction Arjuna did away with his grandsire as well as with his preceptor. Killing is undoubtedly a heinous sin resorted to by wicked people. *Religion is quite against it.* Just as darkness does not co-exist with light, religion is incompatible with bloodshed. Those who are pious and intent on practising the tenets of religion should scrupulously eschew pseudo-religious books which advocate destruction. In this manner charges are found levelled against the Bhagavad Gita.

But what actually is the position of the Gita? It does not stop half way. It goes to the very core of this issue. It proclaims that the panorama of nature is an interminable battle-field. Both the macrocosm and the microcosm are permeated with life. A drop of water contains countless atomic life germs. They are atomic and insignificant when viewed from our angle of vision. But when judged from their own standpoint they are as much important as we claim we are. In the air contained within our closed fist an equally extensive world of living beings exists. The same is the case with a clod of earth. Minute and imperceptible life units muster earth, air and water. Life is all pervasive. When a human being breathes once, millions of atomic life units are done away with. A growing plant is constantly consuming bacteria in millions. And each bacterium is a life unit by itself. There is no food which is not constituted of organic matter. This means that life subsists on life. To live is to live out. New forms of life are built at the cost of old ones.

Destruction is involved in construction. Unalterable is this scheme of Nature. Not a moment passes without destruction taking place. Recognizing this truth in its nakedness is the first step in understanding the plan of Nature.

Creation, preservation and destruction are the three phases of ceaseless activity going on in Nature. These may be termed the triple purpose of cosmos. What is sunrise to one place is sunset to another. It is simultaneously the setting sun as well as the rising sun. Birth into a new body is putting an end to the old worn-out body. Seed dies in order to give birth to a seedling. Beings perish in their old bodies prior to their reincarnation in new ones. The interval between a creation and a destruction is called preservation. Even as the sides of a triangle are interdependent these triple activities are interrelated. If, of these, destruction or death is truly understood the other two become self-evident.

It has to be admitted that Nature is an extensive slaughter-house. Relentlessly she wipes out the unwanted ones. There is science as well as art in this act of Nature. The Bhagavad Gita recognizes this hard fact and assumes the position of the science of destruction. While one depends on nature for subsistence, killing can no more be avoided than heat while residing in the sun. Having gained entrance into this arena, the Gita exhorts, "Do the job that is incumbent on you, as a religious act." All attempt to avoid destruction is futile. Waver not as a vegetating renegade. A weakling has no place here or

hereafter. In the great cosmic plan of action play your part as a hero. Wake up to the reality of this world. Fight the battle of life. Fear nothing. Do not falter in your duty. At the same time be not a slave to duty either. Perform your duty for its own sake. It is by working in freedom that you rise to the realm of worklessness. To a knowing one, duty such as warfare is as sacred as worship in a sanctuary. This being the message of the Gita it has to be accepted as a gospel of carnage as much as a gospel of preservation of social solidarity. In this world of mutual destruction, practise the science of destruction as religiously as the science of mutual help. He alone is able to save the world who has learnt to slay the wicked in a spirit of worship. In unmistakable terms the Gita exhorts man to sanctify slaughter into a holy act. For this reason the Gita may be proudly proclaimed as the gospel of carnage. Virtue consists in wiping out the wicked.

### Book of dissension and disruption

Positive service is rendered by a wind that brings rain-bearing clouds; but a dust storm has only a nuisance value. There are not wanting people who classify the Gita with the dust-raising whirlwind. Conflicting commentaries, they say, have cropped up round this book. They have led to endless dissension and verbal warfare. Had Sri Krishna been precise in his pronouncement, this oft-recurring pettifogging could have been avoided. Interpretation of the Gita has resulted in purposeless and endless argumentation.

There is yet another charge brought against this book It affords scope for reactionaries and revolutionaries to thrive and create dissension in a peace-loving and law-abiding society This book is like gunpowder to those who want to create an explosion It encourages youth to revolt against respectable elders That the killer is no sinner and that in no way he transgresses the moral law is the core of the teaching of the Gita It states that man is not bound by his action The worst of all of Krishna's statements is that he is 'the art of gambling among gamblers' Can there be a greater encouragement to perversion? Are these not sufficient clues to misguide the perverted ones in society? The seed of social disruption lies hidden in this so called scripture Charges such as these have to be met and answered

Really there is no room for confusion of issues in the Gita Yoga Sastra that this book is, it does not countenance disruption and dissension of any kind. The commentators of the Gita were not men of empty talk and purposeless living In their own way they have been pillars of society The tree is known by its fruit The contribution to social welfare and solidarity that the commentators have made through their personal lives is incalculable They were the real lovers of society No trace of self-seeking or exploitation could be found in them On the other hand culture was enshrined in them, and codes of conduct found expression in and through them When such sterling characters had drawn inspiration from the Gita, it cannot be easily disposed

of, as a book of dissension. Each system of philosophy traces its origin to the Gita, thereby claiming sanctity for itself and adding to the glory of the Gita. Various systems of philosophy go to enrich man's spiritual life. These systems supplement and complement one another. They are not empty wrangles as the thoughtless would have it. Even as Nature is the material for various branches of knowledge, Gita is the source of inspiration for the various systems of philosophy.

It is no fault of a sacred book if it happens to be misunderstood by the uninitiated. Ambrosia can be mishandled and turned into poison. Because of this possibility it is not proper to condemn it. If men of evil tendency resolve to read *their* meaning into the Gita it is no fault of that sacred book. It has been the source of inspiration to thousands of holy men in their path to perfection and it will continue to be so for ever. Time will have no adverse effect on this book. It is an eternal and infallible spiritual guide. Persons bereft of sense-control, devotion, detachment, austerity, self-abnegation and a passion for service will not be able to draw the right inspiration from this book. In unmistakable terms the Gita proclaims the unity and sanctity of existence and exhorts man to resort to right action in order to realize this fundamental oneness.

#### Change-over from the *Pleasant* to the *Good*

Sri Krishna and Arjuna are eternal companions. They are kith and kin. A closer relationship than theirs cannot be conceived of. It is indeed an objec-

tive representation of the relationship between the Paramatman and the Jivatman In whatever stage of evolution the individual soul happens to be placed, its origin from and connection with the Cosmic Soul can in no way be gainsaid Support, sustenance and inducement to self fulfilment come constantly and in abundance from the Cosmic Self to the individual self *This cosmic function is reflected* in these two personalities Sri Krishna continues to help Arjuna at all levels whenever he stands in need If Arjuna distinguishes himself in education, culture, administration, statesmanship, the art of averting danger, combating the enemy, accumulating wealth and such other accomplishments, the contribution that Sri Krishna makes in all these respects is not of a small measure Sri Krishna's sister Subhadra is snatched away by Arjuna Though the entire family is up against him for the time being, Sri Krishna alone is a party to the elopement Thus directly or indirectly Sri Krishna is behind every step in the progress that Arjuna makes

All that Arjuna has gained so far is termed *Preyas*-things that bring prosperity, pleasure, power and glory to life Souls incarnate many times in *order to acquire and enjoy these pleasures This* enjoyment has a place in the cosmic plan

Sooner or later comes a turning point in life when the individual self sees the vanity and emptiness of *Preyas*, and hankers after something permanent The slow, steady, and imperceptible mental evolution that Arjuna underwent, the transitory

nature of the earthly pleasures that he enjoyed, the conviction that came to him of the vanity of earthly splendour, the all-destroying effect of the cruel war—all these contributed to Arjuna's change over from *Preyas* to *Sreyas*.

All human endeavours fall under two categories, the *Preyas* and the *Sreyas*. Among the human acquisitions and experiences there is not a single aspect that lies outside the pale of these two. Pleasures that are sense-bound and prone to mutation come under the category of *Preyas*. The generality of mankind are seekers of *Preyas*. To them anything beyond the ken of the senses and the intellect is unbelievable. Any endeavour to obtain *Sreyas*, cannot be looked for in them. But there are a rare few who aspire for the transcendental, hard though it is to achieve. Scriptures designate this transcendental experience as the *Sreyas*. All virtue, strength, self-denial and sublimity are born of *Sreyas*. Arjuna was till then the seeker of *Preyas*. The crisis had now brought a sudden transformation in him. Sri Krishna had patiently waited for this turning-point in his life. All that came under *Preyas* might be imparted to one who claimed kinship and equality of status with the teacher. But that kind of relationship was not sufficient for bestowing *Sreyas*. The reverential attitude of a disciple was quite essential for it. Now Arjuna has perforce taken to the attitude of a true disciple. Sri Krishna is happy over it. With love and compassion he imparts the *Sreyas* to him. Yoga and spiritual enlightenment are all contained in this *Sreyas*.

The sacred act of conferring the *Sreyas* does not take place piecemeal. It comes as a sudden outburst of illumination metamorphosing the recipient into a divine being. At the outset this experience may seem to daze the disciple. But worthy of the enlightenment as he has become, he gets spontaneously attuned to it. As a newly hatched duckling takes to water, the enlightened soul identifies itself with the Cosmic Whole. The Upanishads are intended to awaken cosmic consciousness in the aspirant. One of their revelations runs as follows: "What is beyond the universe is Infinity, what has apparently become the universe is Infinity. Infinity alone is in the manifested and unmanifested states." These sacred books aim at driving home this all-consuming truth in the mind of the novice. In varieties of pattern it is this grand truth that is proclaimed by one and all of them. A student who has undergone the required mental purification catches the message in an instant and merges his individual consciousness into the Cosmic Consciousness, which is Reality.

In this process of imparting Self-knowledge the Bhagavad Gita has a uniqueness and a sublimity of its own. The first chapter in it is merely the setting. No utterance of the Lord finds a place there. But in and through the second and third verses of the second chapter His message in its entirety is delivered. It runs as follows: "At this crisis, wherefrom has this dejection come upon you, O Arjuna, depriving you of your manliness, debarring you from heaven and debasing your earthly

career? Son of Pritha, yield not to cowardice. It ill becomes you. Scorcher of foes, cast off this base faint-heartedness and wake up."

The clue is hereby given to a life of triumph and conquest. This is the core of the teaching of the Gita. Each of the subsequent chapters in the book is an elaboration of this idea from a particular angle. The strong and the virile alone are fit for a life of great consequence. Achievements both here and hereafter are born of competence and manly action. Strength nurtures life. Weakness wears it away. Potency drives away disease; debility aggravates it. Virtue and righteousness are the outcome of strength. Vice and wickedness have their origin in weakness. Cowardice créates crookedness; it is the feeble that resort to foul play. Action born in manliness leads to freedom, and its opposite to bondage. Strength and *Sreyas* are identical. This is the teaching of the Gita.

#### The Bhagavad Gita Upanishad

The Upanishads have their origin in the Vedas. The belief is that the Vedas are without a beginning. For this reason great sanctity is attached to them. But the Bhagavad Gita is an integral part of the Mahabharata, an epic that came into being only the other day. Notwithstanding its recency,the Gita occupies a place on a par with the Upanishads. The reason is not far to seek.The essence of all the Upanishads is contained in the Gita. If those ancient books are cows, the Gita is their milk. Cows are of various hues and of differing stature. But the milk yielded by them is

the same. Maintaining cows may not be possible for all. The laborious art of milking is not also commonly known to all. But to partake of milk is the privilege of one and all. The choice of converting this milk into curds, butter and ghee is again in the hands of all. In similar manner, the Gita may be treated as an easily available guide for life here and hereafter. Besides, the cow cannot be taken wherever one chooses to go. In a preserved form milk may be transported anywhere. The idea is that one who has imbibed the teachings of the Gita need not take the trouble of probing into the rather terse contents of the Upanishads. Sri Krishna was gracious enough to clarify the abstract teachings of the Upanishads Arjuna's craving for enlightenment was the immediate cause of this gracious clarification. Love of the calf induces the cow to secrete and yield milk in plenty. That bounteous supply goes to benefit many other parched mouths. This is the case with the Bhagavad Gita also. Milk may be consumed in proportion to one's digestive power. From the athlete down to the ailing, all can have recourse to it as a wholesome food. The utility of the Gita is equally all-ranging. It is an indispensable guide to a novice who has just commenced his spiritual career. Even to an adept who is at the proximity to the goal it has a message to deliver. Life both in its secular and sacred aspects gets abundantly enriched by the application of the tenets of the Gita. For these reasons a status is conferred on the Bhagavad Gita equal to that of the ancient Upanishads.

**Brahma Vidya**

Innumerable are the sciences that have come into being in the march of time. New branches of them are taking shape day after day. Man's knowledge in all its phases is rapidly on the increase. In the midst of this growing knowledge man is becoming vividly aware of another fact. The more he probes into the mystery of Nature, the more he is able to realize that the unexplored aspects of it happen to be numberless. What is already known is infinitesimal, and what is yet to be known is evidently infinite. This is the case with the scholar as well as with the beginner. Taking this limitation of the human intellect into account, an ancient sage raised a question: "What is it, knowing which, man need make no more search for knowledge? What is it, knowing which, the secrets of Nature do all become revealed?" Bold and indomitable enquiries were made. The doors of Nature were persistently knocked at. Relentless searches were made within and without. This superhuman attempt did not go in vain. The sages of yore had met with enormous success in their profound enquiry. They came face to face with Truth. They intuited the Basis of the elusive and fleeting phenomenal world. The Substratum having been contacted, all mysteries got themselves revealed and explained. This knowledge of the Substratum is known as Brahma Vidya. It is eulogized in terms of other names as well. Theologians have their own terminologies applied to It. Sivajnanam, Atmabodham, Paravidya, the Kingdom of Heaven, Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Nirvanam, Allah—

these are some of the appellations applied to It The metaphysicians call It the *Being* in contrast with Nature, which because of its constant state of flux is called the *Becoming* The purpose of the Gita is to impart the Brahma Vidya, above everything else Arjuna merely wanted to know whether he was to fight or beat a retreat Instead of deciding the immediate issue, why did Sri Krishna digress into a dissertation on that profound subject? Yes, there was a supreme purpose behind it Offering immediate solutions to *immediate problems is one kind of* enlightenment But when ignorance is rooted out all problems get solved once for all With the dawn of Brahma Vidya the mist of nescience vanishes Sri Krishna chose to impart this Supreme Knowledge Among the gifts bestowed on human beings, Brahma Vidya reigns supreme When the recipient becomes worthy and competent, Enlightenment inevitably comes from the Supreme

### Yoga Sastra

Every science has its twin aspects – theory and practice Intellectual grasp of a subject is theory, its application is practice Many a student of Vedanta or any other system of philosophy runs the risk of being entangled in mere theorizing He may derive some intellectual pleasure in such wrangles But life remains untouched On the other hand Brahma Vidya is what touches and transforms life It is intensely practical When applied to life it is called Yoga Sastra This is one of the appellations by which the Bhagavad Gita is known If a wage

earner applies the principles of the Bhagavad Gita to his life, he will become a better wage-earner. A farmer will equip himself better if he only translates the Gita principles into action. A merchant is bound to thrive in his business by putting these tenets to practice. An officer will execute his duty more efficiently when he becomes a yogi. A teacher will throw brighter light on his subject by his taking to the practice of yoga. To sum up, man becomes well equipped for life by taking to yoga. An efficient man is otherwise called a yogi.

All the eighteen chapters in the Gita are designated, each as a type of yoga. The function of the yoga is to train the body and the mind. Progress of any kind in yoga is not for him who is given to weakness or depression. The sorrowing one takes himself off the path of yoga. Patanjali, the great author of Yoga Sastra, makes it plain that yoga is not for him who is given to dejection or worry. Poise and a blissful attitude are indispensable for the practice of yoga. But these were exactly what were not found in Arjuna on the eve of the war. A sense of frustration had overtaken him. In the place of an indomitable calibre of mind, dejection and despondency had marked him for their own. That was just the opposite of the mental make-up required of a man of yoga. Still the first chapter in the Gita is designated a system of yoga. It is called Arjuna Vishada Yogam–Yoga of Arjuna's Dejection. This is no more apt than calling darkness light. Why then is this chapter recognized as a system of yoga ?

Distress and dejection are of two kinds. One kind pertains to earthly desires. There are those who languish because they have not amassed in abundance. That kind of lamentation wears away personality. Valour is thereby set at naught. In a victim to despondency a cloud of ignorance collects more and more. But the dejection that comes over Arjuna on the battle-field does not fall under this category. In fact he dispenses with worldly desires. Even suzeraintý over the three worlds has no attraction for him. He is not able to see what exactly his duty is–to wage the war or to go into the wilderness. It is this conflict that perturbs him. The plan and purpose of life become more mysterious.Life becomes an unbearable burden. So he yields to a breakdown. This attitude bespeaks detachment from worldly concerns. A sort of spiritual anguish has overtaken him. The Messengers of Light advocate this kind of distress as a prelude to spiritual enlightenment. Here it prepares Arjuna for yoga. Blessed are the distressed in heart; they shall be comforted in enlightenment. This is the law of life. Hence this distress of Arjuna is also called a system of yoga.

All the eighteen yogas contained in the eighteen chapters may be reduced to four – the Karma Yoga, the Raja Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga and the Jnana Yoga. Tradition holds that spiritual life begins with Karma Yoga and goes on evolving into the other three respectively. That the sequence of the chapters in the Gita bears testimony to this is their contention.

There are others who compare these four Yogas to the bud, the tender fruit, the unripe fruit and the fully ripe fruit. But neither Sri Krishna's life nor his utterances lend any support to this kind of gradation. It is true that the development of the subject in a chapter leads to the theme of the next. Nevertheless this does not warrant holding that one System of Yoga is anterior to another. All through the discourse the Lord equates Karma with Supreme Jnana. In several places Bhakti is placed on a par with Jnana. Elsewhere Raja Yoga gets a footing parallel to Bhakti. In Him these Yogas suffer no gradation; neither is there anything like evolution of one into the other. These seemingly different Yogas may be said to be various readings of the same phenomenon - the moral and spiritual growth of the individual. While playing the part of the charioteer, Sri Krishna reined four white horses yoked to the chariot. They symbolize the four Yogas yoked to the human career. Those snow-white steeds suggest purity as the basis of all the Yogas. Their combined effort is necessary to draw the chariot forward. All the four Yogas together stimulate life with spirituality. Since Sri Krishna handles all the four Yogas with equal importance he is called Yogeswara.

### Method of Teaching

Incarnations of God as a group have made their teachings as simple as the air we breathe. Children as well as the uneducated are able to grasp their gospels with ease. Abstract principles and abstruse

ideas are brought by these messengers within the ken of the common man Any commentary on their teachings is superfluous On the other hand commentators as a class have tried to read their own cults and creeds into the inspired utterances of the Incarnations *Intellectual sinews such as logic* and disputations are required by philosophers and creedmongers But the Messengers of God have given their spiritual food to humanity with natural ease and *simplicity Their message is to the aspiring souls* what the mother's milk is to the hungry babe The utterances of Sri Rama, Buddha and Jesus require no clarification or elucidation They directly appeal to the heart and the head

The Bhagavad Gita is also easy to understand. A faithful translation into a known language is all that is required A devoted and repeated reading of chapter after chapter will reveal to an ordinary student all the sublime ideas contained in that sacred book Abstruse statements are just a few, interspersed here and there, and they have no direct bearing on practical issues They are intended merely to provide the philosophical background The teachings of the Gita are as simple as *the air we take in and at the same time as profound* as the cosmos around us It is appropriate that Samskrit serves as the medium of expression There is preciseness as well as profundity in this language There is elegance as well as elasticity All the same the simplicity of its mode does not preclude philosophical subtleties Many shades of thought get

themselves expressed in a single statement. Because of its elasticity the Gita does not lose its individuality in a multiplicity of thoughts. Without undergoing any change within itself, a mirror faithfully reflects all faces presented before it. Such is also the speciality of this Gospel. It offers inspiration to all cults and creeds, points out the harmony among them, and itself remains supremely above them all.

There is another speciality in the Gita. It clarifies principles and types of personalities who embody certain principles. But this clarification is not done exhaustively at a stretch in any particular setting. Various aspects of a theme are brought to light in varieties of pattern under varying circumstances and from various points of view. As an article of food is best utilized and assimilated when prepared in different forms and combinations, spiritual drsquisitions in the Gita are made quite palatable through a variety of presentations. One or two examples will drive home the point. "A Pandita or a wise man is he who mourns neither for the living nor for the dead." This definition gives us an insight into the characteristic of such a personality. Elsewhere comes another fitting definition supplementing the previous one. "Same-sighted is the wise man towards creatures high and low." Here our conception of the Pandita gets a little more widened. In two more places the word Pandita serves to enlarge our idea of him. If we piece these distinctions together we get a complete picture of the Pandita type of personality. Let us examine one more example — yoga.

Perhaps this word occurs most often throughout the discourse We shall however content ourselves with two or three typical definitions of it "Yoga is the very dexterity of work," is a very telling statement "Even mindedness is yoga," is another equally important definition "Disentanglement from contact-born misery is known as yoga" This is yet another statement in explanation of it Yoga in its entirety is in this manner elucidated stage by stage.

To a superficial reader it may seem that quite a number of pet ideas are repeated in the book to the point of boredom But a close study of the book is bound to disprove this view Profound ideas allow themselves to be approached, applied and verified from different angles of vision We may take the word yoga again for enquiry In the first six chapters it connotes Karma Yoga in all of its aspects In the course of the second six chapters it applies to Bhakti with its numerous implications. The trend of the last six chapters is towards the elucidation of Jnana through the use of the same word, yoga The definition of yoga is capable of kaleidoscopic changes from the standpoints of action, devotion and knowledge The principle of the ego may also be said to have various shades of meaning. Coloured by different settings it subjects itself to several readings These multi readings do not, however, in any manner mutilate the simplicity and directness of the terminology They only help comprehend the meaning lucidly and in as deep a

manner as possible. Now we shall take up the word Atman. In the course of the first six chapters of the book it connotes Existence. In the next six chapters this word applies to Bliss in particular, while in the last six chapters it leans towards Knowledge. When these points are borne in mind the question of repetition of the same ideas does not arise. The Gita suffers neither from extravagance nor from meagreness of statements of fact. All salient points are proportionately and exhaustively dealt with. A clear and exhaustive exposition of Existence - Knowledge - Bliss or *Sat - cit - ānandam* is the theme of this book.

#### Sruti and Smriti

The popularity that the Gita enjoys is indisputable. The reason for this is patent. It occupies simultaneously the position of the Sruti and Smriti. What these two types of scripture are has to be understood first. The Upanishads come under the first category. For generations together they have been preserved by accurate verbal transmission by an unbroken succession of masters and disciples. Notwithstanding this seemingly tedious process, these sacred books have suffered no mutilation. The original inspired utterances and the ideas enshrined therein have all been preserved in tact. These fundamentals continue to be to the spiritual men, what multiplication tables are to students of mathematics. Neither of these can be modified or altered. Spiritual tenets are eternal verities.

While Sruti means what is heard, Smriti means what is remembered. Social laws, usages, customs and manners and moral codes do all come within the purview of Smriti. It may be styled as applied sociology. Authentic Smritis have always had their basis in Srutis. Among the oft-quoted Smritis those of Parasara and Manu may be said to be typical. But these Smritis are not held veritable and inviolable. According to times, places and circumstances they undergo modification. An individual or a body of law-givers create these Smritis periodically according to social needs. The Constitution that the Free Republic of India has made for itself may in a way be termed as the latest among the Smritis. These books are religio-social codes undergoing changes corresponding to the changes in the order of society.

In the Bhagavad Gita the Sruti and the Smriti get themselves blended. Because of its being an exhaustive collection of spiritual laws, the Gita is called the Sruti. These spiritual laws when applied to life are called the Sanatana Dharma—eternal order and righteousness. The Gita may therefore be treated as a manual of the Sanatana Dharma. It is a Directory on social fabric and social growth. It further points out how the eternal verities can be applied in modified forms under changing circumstances. A parallel may make the point clear. Gold is ever a valuable metal. But the mint it undergoes varies in different reigns. Coins of one reign may not gain currency in another, but the value of gold

is not affected thereby. Sanatana Dharma is like the gold while its varying applications are like its mintages. Smritis also have their limitations like the minted coins. But among the Smritis the mintage of the Gita is unique in itself. Its currency is not affected in any manner by extraneous changes. The duties of man enjoined in it are of a universal nature. Problems pertaining to life, individual as well as collective, are solved in it on the basis of fundamental principles. In this perishing world there are many problems which are of a persisting nature. The function of the Gita is to handle these persisting problems. Life has two aspects — the changeful and the changeless. The Bhagavad Gita is the master-key to both the aspects. It correctly reveals the phenomenal and the noumenal. For this reason this book is called the Smriti among the Smritis. It remains unalterable under all circumstances.

### Exposition of the Sentence Sublime

There is a tenor common to all the great scriptures of the world. Directly or indirectly they are all exponents of the *mahā-vākyam*, the Sentence Sublime. Now, what is this *mahā-vākyam?* It proclaims the relationship between God and man. The Vedas contain four such proclamations. They are regarded the most sacred among inspired utterances. The most popular one among them is '*Tat tvam asi*' This sentence contains three words. When literally translated it means 'That thou art'. In prose order it is 'Thou art That'. That you are not alien to God is the purport of this sublime sentence. In

some form or other this idea is contained in all the scriptures. That book which does not deal with this supreme idea is no scripture. The Bhagavad Gita is from beginning to end a grand commentary on the sublime statement—Thou art That.

There are eighteen chapters in the Gita. They are conventionally called the Three Sixes the *triṣatkam*. The first six chapters elucidate the word *thou* in the *mahā-vākyam* The word stands for the Jivatman or the individual soul with its potentialities and possibilities. The seeming limitations of the individual soul, and how they could be overcome to the point of perfection are fully delineated here. Chapters seven to twelve form the second *satkam*. This portion deals with the word *That* indicating God or the Ultimate Reality. What is called Nature is none other than that Reality contacted through the senses and the intellect. The Self that is immanent in Nature, that which transcends Nature and that which is the Absolute — all these are the same Cosmic Personality viewed from different grades of intuition. The third *ṣatkam* contains the last six chapters. The predicate *art* gets explained in this portion. The inviolable relationship between the Cosmic Reality and the individual soul is well established in this part of the book. In this manner the three aspects of the *mahā-vākyam* have an equal number of chapters allotted for the elucidation of each of them. Giving equal weight to all the three is another speciality of the Gita. Indeed it seems that this book has been divinely

planned solely for the purpose of the exposition of the *mahā-vākyam*.

### Commentaries

The function of a commentary is to expand, explain, expound and extol the contents of a great book. It is but natural that numerous commentaries crop up round divinely inspired books. Several are the commentaries on the Scriptural Trinity—the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. If a person desires to extol or establish a particular creed or school of thought, it becomes his first and foremost duty to derive authority and sanction for it from this Scriptural Trinity. Otherwise his creed or cult runs the risk of being rejected as heterodox. The commentaries that have come up so far do often suffer from one serious disadvantage. Consciously or unconsciously their authors have tried to read the meaning of their own creeds and cults into these three sacred books. Among these three books again, it is easier for them to read their own particular philosophy into the Bhagavad Gita than into the other two books. This being the case, the largest number of commentaries now available are naturally on the Gita.

Translation is another important consideration. The popularity or usefulness of a book is not to be judged by the number of languages into which it is translated. The one solitary book that has been rendered into almost all the languages in the world is the Holy Bible. But an achievement of this type need not in itself be a hallmark of divine perfection.

Political power, missionary zeal and material resources are factors capable of creating popularity for anything under the sun, not to speak of a book like the Holy Bible. Christendom has had the benefit of all these three simultaneously. But the position of the Bhagavad Gita is different. The propagators of this book have never exploited extraneous powers for their purpose. The translators of this book were actuated by the noble urge that the great ideals contained in it were highly beneficial to humanity. Propagation of dogma, cult and creed comes under one category and the propagation of ideals and principles under another. That the Bhagavad Gita is an embodiment of life principles which are supremely above all cults and creeds is self-evident. The influence that it leaves in the mind of its student bears ample testimony to this fact. Let us take a striking case for example. The first English rendering of this book was done by the East India Company. Warren Hastings, the then Governor-General, had contributed a foreword to it. Happily his exact words are available to us. "These (writings of the inhabitants of India) will survive when the British Dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance." He alone can make this significant utterance, who has known the Law that governs human life. And the Bhagavad Gita teaches just those Laws and principles that govern human life. These Laws and principles require no patron or defender. Even without the aid of

propagators these principles ever propagate themselves in the scheme of Nature.

The commentators on the Gita were those who had the least to do with pomp, power or wealth. They had their minds anchored on things sacred. There is a monument to their devout labours erected at Kurukshetra. A temple dedicated to the Bhagavad Gita is today found in that holy place. It is claimed that this was the actual spot on which this immortal utterance was made by the Lord. In that temple are enshrined as many as three hundred commentaries on the Gita, belonging to different periods of time. The writers of these commentaries were themselves men of sterling character and deep erudition. The Bhagavad Gita was the common source of inspiration to one and all of them. This Fountain of Life does not get exhausted with the flow of time. To the spiritual aspirants it is as inspiring today as it ever has been. Because of its eternal value and appeal new and modern commentaries are naturally cropping up.

### The Best among the Commentaries

Among this multiplicity of commentaries, is there not the possibility of a student getting stranded as in a forest? As they run into hundreds, which of them is to be accepted and which, rejected? This is a question that may well baffle a novice. The sunrise has a beauty and charm of its own and it can be extolled variously by various branches of science. Astronomy, astrology, medical science, natural science, mathematics, meteorology, biology and

several other sciences are capable of viewing this phenomenon, each from its own angle of vision. The sun is the one source of inspiration to all these view points. As the same rising sun provides scope for being variously viewed, so does the Bhagavad Gita allow itself to be commented on, in varieties of ways. It gives inspiration to innumerable cults and creeds; *and at the same time it is supremely above* them all. A point may now be stated which goes to proclaim the glory of the Gita in an effective manner. There is a commentary which may be claimed to have been the fore-runner of the Gita itself. We may go a step further in our pronouncement and *make bold to say that the life of Krishna is the* grand source out of which the Gita has emerged. The life that Sri Krishna lived is the most sublime embodiment of Vedantic principles. The greatest *contribution that an Incarnation of God makes to* the world is His life and career. He is necessarily a man with a message. His deeds and exploits, even more than His utterances deliver that message in unmistakable terms. Through the force of His character He exerts an abiding influence on those who come in contact with Him. His demeanour under varying circumstances teaches humanity more eloquently than His declamation, if any. But Sri Krishna did speak on quite a few occasions. The best among His discourses is of course the Gita on the battle-field. But the contents of this talk were constantly demonstrated in His career. He preached nothing but what He put into practice all through His life. There-

fore the greatest 'commentary' on the Gita is the life of its author.

The first and foremost of His mandates to Arjuna was—*Kṣudraṁ hṛdaya daurbalyaṁ tyaktvottiṣṭha paraṁtapa*—"Rise, O hero, casting offyour petty faint-heartedness." More significant than this mandate was Madhusudana's remaining firm as a rock under many a catastrophic circumstance. His action proved itself more effective than his words. Feebleness found no more quarter in his mind than darkness finds in the sun. He exhorted Arjuna to heroic action, and he was himself an embodiment of superhuman achievements. Parthasarathi that He was, He put it to His disciple to pour forth love in abundance to all. And for His part He was Love incarnate. "A champion of righteousness makes no distinction between friend and foe" was the statement made by Sri Krishna. He proved himself an embodiment of that teaching. He behaved in the manner in which fire does. It burns them who ill-contact it and serves them who handle it properly. A righteous man's concern is to uphold virtue and to wipe out its opposite. This was the very act that was found exemplified in Govinda's earthly career. "Nature is the embodiment of activity; Atman, the Substratum behind it, is unaffected by action." This is one of the cardinal teachings of Sri Krishna. This principle stood supremely illustrated in the Teacher himself. All the other characters in the epic of the Mahabharata rolled into one did not do a quarter of the work that Sri Krishna did. While the physical

aspect of his was engaged in such intense activity, the Pure Consciousness of the Great Self in Him was ever established in Its Sublimity. Unlike an ordinary mortal he never wept or shed tears. There was nothing in the world to cause him any disappointment. No event did ever spring a surprise on him. Care and anxiety could no more find quarter in him than mist in the solar blaze. He was ever established in the beaming bliss of Self Perfection. Limited as the human intellect is, it cannot fully comprehend the core of Sri Krishna's Personality. But to the extent to which one understands Krishna, one understands the Gita as well. The best commentary on the Gita, therefore, is Sri Krishna Himself. As time and disposition permit, a student may read any number of commentaries. But their merit can be rightly measured only with the yardstick of the spiritual glory of Sri Krishna.

**Classification of the Commentaries**

Commentaries on the *Gita* being very many in number, there is the possibility of their contradicting one another. Can contradictory ideas be at the same time soul-elevating ideas?—*This is the question* that naturally rises to one's mind. In the midst of seeming discord, some kind of concord perhaps lies hidden deep below. If the position of a mirror is granted to the Gita, the commentaries are the various reflections cast on it. Everybody sees his own face reflected therein. The reflecting mirror alone is the factor common to all of them. Even so the ideas which are basic to all the commentaries

are found in the Gita. If the basic idea is not there in the Gita, the commentary then becomes heterodox. Whichever commentary dares to transgress the bounds of the fundamental principles, runs the risk of being rejected as unorthodox. Varieties of views are permissible within the bounds of orthodoxy. One may view the Gita as the philosophy of love. Another may maintain that it is a manual of pure knowledge. A third may with equal vehemence contend that the Gita expounds the philosophy of yoga. We may come across a commentator who clings to the view that mundane matters receive no mention at all in the Gita. It is also possible for us to come by an opponent who holds a view diagonally opposite to the above-mentioned commentator; according to him the sole concern of the Gita is with this mundane world where one is expected to live a rich and intensive life; the hereafter may severely be left alone to take care of itself. Students of politics there are who find political philosophy occupying the foremost place in the Gita. Warriors have not lagged behind the others in proclaiming that the Gita is solely a science of warfare. The commentaries enumerated so far, come under no particular classification; each of them stands by itself.

The accredited commentators are usually grouped into upholders of three systems—Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita. Their respective convictions and dispositions are made manifest through one or the other of these three systems. The expositions

of the Gita they make, take their colourings from these three schools of thought. It cannot, however, be maintained that the views held by all the Advaitins are all of the same pattern. Several of them have expressed varying shades of opinion. Even in regard to the very definition of Advaita they do not all agree. Turning now to the Visishtadvaita we find the position to be more or less the same. Within the jurisdiction of this system of philosophy divergent ideas can be traced. The position of the Dvaita is in no way different. Within its fold its adherents have their own peculiarities. Each commentator maintains a missionary zeal to propagate his favourite ideas. Among the champions of the Advaita system, Sankara stands foremost. To the Visishtadvaitins the uncontested leader is Ramanuja. The Dvaitins in their turn look up to Madhva for guidance. These three Acharyas have been recognized as the chief promulgators of the three systems of philosophy. Their commentaries on the Gita form the basis of this classification. Sri Krishna is the embodiment of broadmindedness, deep wisdom and great tolerance. A true student of the Gita and a loyal commentator are expected to approximate to Him.

**Vedanta**

The principles enunciated in the Scriptural Trinity go by the name of Vedanta. The word is a compound of Veda and Anta. It means the end or culmination of the Vedas. The teachings of the Vedas deal with the mundane world. They give us the relative knowledge. What pertains to the senses

and the intellect is relative knowledge. But the scope of Vedanta transcends this relative world and relative knowledge. It leads the aspirant to transcendental knowledge and finally to absolute knowledge. The limitations of the senses and the intellect have to be got over in order to reach that higher knowledge.

Vedanta is the repository of all the spiritual principles contained in all the religions that have evolved in India and elsewhere. It may be asserted that no religion or theology contains a spiritual law that is not found in the Vedanta. For this reason Vedanta may be viewed as the mother of all religions. Ultimate Reality may be connoted by any appellation, says Vedanta. Controversies in religion centre round names and descriptions. But Vedanta exhorts us not to be name-bound and dogma-bound. It leads the enquirer into the Reality behind names and forms. There is the stuff that quenches thirst, variously called aqua, water, *pani* and *jal*. Quarrels arise in regard to nomenclature. Earnest enquirers into the ultimate Reality do not get entangled in schism and dogma. Creeds and cults are prone to misguide seekers after Truth. They create confusion too. But Vedanta always holds aloft the torch light of enquiry above all schisms, and focusses attention on the realization of Truth in Its nakedness.

The core of the Dvaita, Visishtadvaita and Advaita has to be known. Three categories of Reality are presented to us by them. Jagat or the universe we live in is one category. Jivas or the individual

souls that live in the universe form the second *category. The Substratum behind the universe and* the innumerable souls is the third category. This third one is the repository of all knowledge and power. Not only does It sustain, but also govern and control the destiny of the Jagat and the Jivas. Enshrouded as the Jivas are in the Jagat, they subject themselves *to countless births and transmigrations. Through* transmigration they either evolve to higher orders of life or involve to the lower ones. Virtue and righteous acts help them go upwards. Vice and sinful acts drag them downwards Mukti or emancipation is effected by giving oneself away in toto to God. *Complete disentanglement from the meshes* of the world is thereby obtained. Mukti is the goal of all Jivas This fundamental position is common to all the three systems of philosophy. The specialities of the three systems may now be gone into.

According to Dvaita, the universe, the individual souls and God are three separate and everlasting entities. God rules over the universe and the souls. The souls in their ignorance are entangled in the universe. Through devotion to God and through His mercy obtained thereby, the souls are to free themselves from the bondage of the world and attain the realm of God. This state of living with God in Heaven is termed Mukti. There the Jivas are eternally in the presence of their Lord. Their individuality is not lost because of Mukti

Visishtadvaita literally means 'qualified non-dualism.' *God alone exists, according to it The*

cosmos is His body. The Jivas exist as innumerable life-cells in that cosmic body. As the rays of the sun are inseparable from it, the individual souls cannot be separated from God. With the dawn of intuitive knowledge, the Jiva realizes that the Paramatman (God) is the whole and he an infinitesimal part of It. The attainment of this knowledge leads to emancipation. Complete self-surrender is the means to the attainment of this goal. In the state of Mukti the Jiva is ever aware that he is a limb of the Lord.

Advaita literally means non-dualism. What are termed Jagat and Jiva and Brahman are not really separate entities. Reality is one without a second. It is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Infinite. It has intrinsic power to manifest Itself as the Jagat and the Jiva. This inherent power goes by the name of *Māyā*. Brahman and *Māyā* are inseparable. This is the implication of the word Advaita. It is because of his ignorance that the Jiva fancies that he is separate from the universe and the Substratum behind it. With the dawn of knowledge this feeling of difference vanishes. The Reality alone exists. Because of Its *Māyāśakti* It manifests Itself as the Jiva and the Jagat. Resolving this *śakti* into Itself, It also remains unmanifest. In Its kinetic state it is Saguna Brahman (Conditioned Reality), in the static Nirguna (Absolute Reality). As the wave subsides into the ocean the individual soul dissolves into the Absolute. This is emancipation according to the Advaita system of philosophy.

Evidences are available in the Scriptures in support of all the three systems of philosophy Human life itself is a composite of these three systems In the wakeful state man moves about and transacts He is then in the plane of Dvaita The world he lives in and the persons he contacts are all entities independent of him Then comes the next state The experiencer of this world of multiplicity goes to sleep The world of variety vanishes The dream-world comes into being The same plurality is experienced again But the men and world found in dreams are different from those found in the waking state One has external reality while the other is a phantom of the mind The dream world of plurality exists nowhere except in the mind of the experiencing individual Here there is a perception of dualism while actually it is all monism This is the position of the Visishtadvaita Then there is the coveted dreamless sleep Contentless consciousness alone persists there Naught has the power to obstruct the continuity of this consciousness The self that is in the waking and dream states continues to be in the dreamless slumber as well This is the position of Advaita—one without a second Mutually exclusive though these are, these three experiences—wakefulness, dream and dreamless sleep—are indispensable to a man entangled in the meshes of the world And all these three types of experiences are the mundane counterparts of the stages of experience in intuitive knowledge The contention among the commentators is in regard to the relative validity of these three forms of

experience, each commentator maintaining that his experience alone constitutes the Ultimate Truth.

### The way of Sri Krishna

The knowers of Truth have equated Sri Krishna with Reality or Paramatman. The plan and purpose of Vedanta is to lead the aspirant towards the Reality. Seemingly man is encaged within a mortal coil. His physical frame seems to be caught within the clothings; but the putting on or off the raiment does not in fact affect the body. Thereby it neither gains nor loses in stature.Such even was Sri Krishna's identification with His body. For the guidance of the world, He had just assumed that mortal frame as if in play. While ordinary mortals lean towards one or the other system of philosophy, in Himself Krishna was not a Dvaitin, Visishtadvaitin or Advaitin. He was not touched by the wranglings of the philosophers. These three schools of thought, on the other hand, ever pay homage to His Personality. Each system attempts in its own way to contact and create a relationship with Him according to its convictions. Sri Krishna is ever Himself. Inspired by His Proximity, His Presence and His Personality these three systems of philosophy have vied with one another in glorifying His Exuberance.

The Bhagavad Gita does not exhort anyone to be a dualist, a qualified monist or a monist. "Wake up to your supreme consciousness. Be established in your divine nature. You are omnipotent in your sphere. Perform your duty with ease and spontaneity. You have not come into this world to drag

*on a wretched existence. There is an inviolable and* holy relationship between you and this world. It is yoga to make this relationship operative. Do achieve this in a magnanimous manner. Through effective functioning let all of your faculties pay homage to your ever-expanding consciousness. As the blossom sends forth its fragrance, let your love become all-embracing and inspiring. Like the blazing sun, may your intellect throw lustre on all that you contact. *When you wake up to this spiritual eminence,* Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita take their respective places and function in the hierarchy of your enlightened personality." In this manner the yogeswara exhorts the souls to become yogis.

It is remarkable that Sri Ramakrishna followed in the footsteps of Sri Krishna. He was not concerned with the relative merits of religions. Neither *did he ransack his brains to find subtle differences* among the multifarious systems of Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita. His entire attention was focussed on transforming life into a spiritual dynamo. He was seized with God-intoxication. If he ever made any physical effort, it was for the worship of the Supreme. The thoughts and feelings that crowded in his mind came in as a result of his search for God. Nothing in the world was alien to his all-embracing divine love. Apart from God he claimed none as his associate, kith or kin. The grace of the Lord was the only fortune that he inherited in superabundance. With characteristics such as these, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was

the embodiment of all the traits of perfection mentioned in the Gita. But he was not given to the study of the Gita or any other scripture. He was an antipode to all book-learning, sacred or secular. What he expounded to others were none other than his personal experiences that came to him as a result of his prolonged and intense spiritual life.

In this commentary have been incorporated such of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna as seem in tune with the trend of the Gita. This venture, we know, is far from perfection. Pondering over the utterances of these two mighty spiritual giants, one feels that there is endless scope for striking parallels between them. Creeds, cults, dogmas and philosophical disputations are all kept out of this commentary. To make the various kinds of spiritual practices explicit and practicable is the endeavour made in this commentary.

**Definition of God**

God in His absolute state is beyond the ken of mind and speech. He is indefinable. But when He is immanent in the universe, He is denoted as *Sat-cit-ānandam*—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. There is no other connotation which is as appropriate as this. A more comprehensive and exhaustive definition than this cannot be had. That which is not affected by time, space and causation is *Sat* or Reality. But all the same, Reality puts on the appearance of getting entangled in time, space and causation. Limiting adjuncts—*Upādhis*—are thereby created. It is because of these limiting adjuncts that the individual

*souls or the Jivatmans have come into being* The Jivatmans are the manifestations of the Reality, the Paramatman These individualized souls are moreover given to ceaseless activity Karma is concomitant with Jivahood As light and heat happen to be part and parcel of the blazing sun,karma is inherent in Jiva Between the Jiva and his karma,the explanation of one necessarily contains the explanation of the other The first six chapters of the Gita do therefore deal concurrently with the principles of the Karma Yoga and the category of the individual soul Thought or mentation is a subtle form of karma For this reason the sixth chapter of the Gita which deals with meditation, is given a place in the first section

Verily each activity is actuated by will There is no karma independent of the will Man wills to walk, to eat, to sleep, to wake up and so on, and as a result action ensues The gross manifestation of the will is action The entire creation is the manifestation of the cosmic will All forms of will resolve themselves ultimately into the will to live It is the innate desire to preserve life that transforms itself into innumerable activities Existence, not extinction is the essential nature of the soul God is Life Souls have emanated from God So they attempt to assert life in the midst of the seeming extermination imposed on them by the play of Nature Preserving life in the face of death and seeking permanence in the midst of perdition, are the workings of the will to assert existence This assertion of existence is called *Sat* And God is defined as *Sat*.

The first six chapters of the Gita are devoted to the elucidation of *Sat* or Existence aspect of the Reality.

Machines turn out work and man also turns out work. But there is a sharp difference between the two. Man feels, but machines do not. Feeling is concomitant with life. It undergoes several modifications. Like and dislike, friendship and enmity, fulfilment and frustration, admiration and jealousy, support and opposition—these are all manifestations of feeling in various forms. Expressions such as like, friendship, fulfilment, admiration and support are all the positive aspects of the faculty of feeling, while dislike, enmity, frustration, jealousy and opposition are all its negative expressions. The positive aspects of emotion promote growth and evolution. Negative ones retard. To sublimate emotion to the highest pitch is the summum bonum of life.

Chapters seven to twelve of the Bhagavad Gita are devoted to the definition of God, and the cultivation of devotion. Purified emotion is Bhakti or devotion. Allegedly impure emotions become pure when directed towards God. Man's love of God increases in direct proportion to his being soaked in His glory. As iron is attracted towards a magnet, a man of devotion is attracted towards God. And God is Love. Pure Love generates sweetness. It also expresses itself as bliss. Supreme bliss is divinity itself. *Anandam Brahmam*—Bliss is Reality. It is in search of this Bliss that souls struggle and hug life. But for its bliss, life would not be tolerated

even for a moment It would be voluntarily liquidated Out of the fully blossomed flower of emotion flows the nectar of *anandam* The second part of the Gita exhorts man to feast on It

Inert matter exists, a living being also exists The difference between the existences of these two has to be taken note of A living being is aware of its own existence while the other is not Awareness is born of cognition and it is self-evident A living being knows that it exists This act of knowing is cognition There is a variation in the intensity of cognition Highly evolved beings have more of cognition while those in the early stages have it enshrouded in inertia The difference between one life and another is in the degree of cognition This difference is one of degree, not of kind A mounting release of cognition as well as a condensed intensification of it, is the plan of nature

Between emotion and cognition there is a link When iron is heated it melts and becomes soft Instantly it gives out lustre Emotion in living beings may be equated with the melting process in iron The next point that has to be admitted is the equation of lustre in the melted metal with cognition This parallel of the molten state growing lustrous is drawn from inert matter Now let us turn to living beings In them emotion and cognition coexist, when emotion gets purified, cognition gets sharpened Love and sympathy between two persons lead to an understanding better than the one that is commonly found among casual acquaintances And

to the extent men understand each other affinity develops. This link between love and knowledge can be made use of to strengthen the relationship between God and man. Love of God leads to a knowledge of Him. The more one understands God the more one loves Him. Love and knowledge are the obverse and the reverse of the same fact of Godhood. The inter-relation between emotion and cognition is indeed patent in all stages and phases of life.

Intelligence, awareness, cognition, consciousness, conscience—these are terms indicating the same faculty. Chapters thirteen to eighteen of the Gita delineate the path of knowledge. By becoming brighter and brighter a burning lamp reveals itself and its surroundings in an increasing measure. It also begins to throw increasing light on the objects brought to its presence. Let us suppose that the lamp is placed in a glass case, coated with dirt. Bright though the flame is, its brilliance is seemingly tarnished. To the extent the glass undergoes cleansing, brilliance becomes patent. The divine lamp of Intelligence is enshrined in the temple of the human frame. As the faculty of understanding undergoes purification, the inner Light begins to shine with greater glory. The processes of cleansing the faculty of understanding are presented in the third section dealing with the path of knowledge. God is Light. It is ultimately realized by the seeker that what shines through the human frame is none other than the inextinguishable Cosmic

Light The yoga of knowledge contributes towards the purification of the faculty of understanding until it reaches its culmination in intuitive knowledge *Sat-cit-ānandam* or Life, Light and Love are the inseparable three phases of the same Reality Karma Yoga postulates *Sat*, Bhakti Yoga postulates *ānandam* and Jnana Yoga, *cit* All the three systems of yoga culminate in Yogeswara The aspirant is expected to follow all these three systems of yoga simultaneously until they find fulfilment in him as well Perfection in him then becomes complete He becomes one with God and God gets defined in him

**The Scripture Universal**

Certain criteria contribute to make a book universal in its character The language in which it happens to be couched is not in itself of great consequence The Bhagavad Gita has come into *being in Samskrit, a sacred medium no doubt.* But this book does not derive its sanctity and importance from this fact as such Neither does the fact of its translation into a number of languages add to its merit With modern facilities it is easily possible for a book to run into an enormous number of impressions in the press and to find a ready market all over the world On these grounds men of wisdom do not attribute universalism to a book The fact that thousands or even millions pour over the pages of a particular book day after day does not necessarily establish a claim to universalism for that book. The sanctity of a book does not depend upon a census of its readers The most extensively read

printed matter is the newspaper. Almost every other man reads it, but it becomes a back number then and there. In contrast to this, literature on the path to perfection is studied by hardly a few at a time. What is more, this sacred study is put into practice by a fewer still, while those who attain perfection as a result of such study and practice are very rare indeed. On this ground of fewness and rarity the search after perfection should not be dismissed as something of no import. Its value is at par at all times and with all people. The inviolable law that governs life is that all have to attain perfection at one time or another. That book alone is of universal value which reveals this Path to Perfection.

There are sufficient grounds to grant universalism to the Bhagavad Gita. In unmistakable terms it upholds perfection as the goal of life. Books that point the way to perfection stand on a pedestal of their own. Self-perfection is the acme of human aspirations. Sooner or later all have to pay homage to it and attain it. The Gita is a Clarion Call to this goal.

Self-perfection is the goal in life. Yoga is the means to it. Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga get their due place in the Bhagavad Gita. A bird requires two wings and a tail for its flight. The soul is endowed with Bhakti and Jnanam to serve as two wings. Karma Yoga serves as the tail that maintains the balance. All spiritual practices are a part and parcel of these three yogas. Scriptures pertaining to religions are innumerable, but they are

seldom all-inclusive in enunciating the Laws that govern life. There are books which, while giving all attention to the life hereafter, ignore our earthly existence altogether. There are yet other books which aim at pinning all our attention to life in this mundane world only. They assume indifference if not antipathy to existence that transcends the senses and the intellect. But the Bhagavad Gita is perfectly balanced in its outlook. It exhorts the aspirant to make the best of the mundane world, and also to prepare himself to draw inspiration from what is beyond. The Gita further contends that proper attunement with the mundane leads to yoga or union with the supermundane; the reverse of it equally holds good; in other words, a spiritual man alone is best equipped for worldly life.

It is customary with people to divide human activities into two distinctive types—the spiritual and the temporal, the sacred and the secular. But the Bhagavad Gita makes no such artificial distinction. Life pertaining to this world is in no way different from the spiritual. There is continuity and homogeneity in life in all its stages. Man will be in the hereafter none other than what he is here and now. Change of body effects no more change in the personality than does change of clothings. Mode of action it is that makes a person what he is. But action by itself is neither sacred nor secular. The attitude with which it is performed brings about a magical change in it. All actions become sacred in the hands of a spiritual man. On the contrary a

man with a material outlook drags down even a sacred act to the vulgar plane. Because of his earth-bound outlook, the uninitiated one fouls sacred acts into secular, whereas the message of the Gita is to metamorphose all actions into liberating sacred ones. This distinctive feature makes the Gita a book of universal application.

Will, emotion and cognition are the three aspects of the phenomenon of the mind. Nought exists in psyche beyond the realm of these three functions. A healthy and wholesome mind has a universal value. Nothing on earth or in heaven can compare with a fully evolved mind. He owns everything who owns a fully developed mind. A harmonious development of the will, emotion and cognition goes to constitute a perfect mind. The slightest inequality among these three functions will, to that extent, result in imperfection in the formation of character. The Bhagavad Gita has laid emphasis on this all-important factor. In order to stress the equal importance of the three phases of the mind, the eighteen chapters in the Gita get themselves equally divided and are devoted to the development of the will, the emotion and the cognition. Because of its masterly exposition of this all-absorbing issue of human life, to the Bhagavad Gita may be assigned the unique status of the Scripture Universal.

The plan and purpose of the Gita is to evolve out of man, a personality that is perfect from all points of view. A strong body and a virile mind form the material of which such a personality is

*built.* Efficiency to the core is the criterion of a powerful personality. It is efficiency that makes character. To do good and to make others do good is possible only to the powerful in body and mind. The next great factor in the formation of personality is love. All living beings are endowed with love, though the degree of it may vary. And this love can be purified as well as intensified. From pure love emanates sweetness in all its excellence. It has the power to bind all beings in affable unity. The third and final factor is the intellect. It may be equated with the broad blazing sun, which reveals everything in its true light. But for the intellect, the higher qualities of things remain unrecognized. It is the intellect again that guides beings to right action. To a person endowed with an efficient hand, with a loving heart and with a clear head nothing more remains to be added. He becomes a complete personality verging on Divinity. Perfection marks him for its own. A harmonious development of the hand, the heart and the head is patent in such a personality.

The Gita is the perfect guide to those who aspire to build a perfect personality.

Every student of the Gita is a potential Arjuna. May he receive Light in his own way from the Scripture Universal.

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Very few understand that the aim of human life is to see God.

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All that can be learned by going through the whole of the Gita can be as well accomplished by repeating "Gita," "Gita"—Gita-gi-ta-gita, ten times; it virtually comes to be "Ta-gi" "Ta-gi"—a modification of "Tyagi," "Tyagi," which means one who has given up the world both outwardly and from the mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Those who work without any consciousness of their lower ego are not affected with evil, for they work for the good of the world. To work without motive, to work unattached, brings the highest bliss and freedom. This secret of Karma Yoga is taught by the Lord Sri Krishna in the Gita.

— Swami Vivekananda

If one reads this one sloka – "Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies!"- he gets all the merits of reading the entire Gita; for in this one sloka lies imbedded the whole Message of the Gita.

— Swami Vivekananda

# गीता ध्यानम्

## GITA DHYANAM

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतम् ।
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीं अष्टादशाध्यायिनीं
अंब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥ १

*Om pārthāya pratibodhitām*
*bhagavatā nārāyaṇena svayaṁ*
*vyāsena grathitām purāna muninā*
*madhye mahābhāratam* ।
*advaitāmṛtavarṣiṇīṁ bhagavatīm*
*aṣṭādaśādhyāyinīm*
*amba tvām anusandadhāmi bhagavadgīte*
*bhavadveṣinīṁ* ॥

ॐ *Om* (the monosyllable indicative of Supreme Brahman) पार्थाय प्रतिबोधिताम् *pārthāya pratibodhitām* with which Partha (Arjuna) was enlightened भगवता *bhagavatā* by the Lord नारायणेन *nārāyaṇena* by Narayana स्वयम् *svayam* Himself व्यासेन *vyāsena* by Vyasa ग्रथिताम् *grathitām* incorporated पुराण मुनिना *purāṇa muninā* by the ancient Muni मध्ये महाभारतम् *madhye mahābhāratam* in the midst of Mahabharata अद्वैत अमृत वर्षिणीम् *advaita amṛta varṣiṇīm* the showerer of the nectar of Advaita भगवतीम् *bhagavatīṁ* the Divine Mother अष्टादश अध्यायिनीम् *aṣṭādaśa adhyāyinīm* in the form of eighteen chapters अम्ब *amba* affectionate Mother त्वाम् *tvāṁ* Thee अनुसंदधामि *anusandadhāmi* I meditate भगवद्गीते *bhagavad gīte* O Bhagavad Gita भवद्वेषिणीम् *bhavadveṣiṇīṁ* destroyer of rebirth

**Om, O Bhagavad Gita, with which Partha (Arjuna) was enlightened by the Lord Narayana Himself and which was incorporated in the Mahabharata by the ancient Muni Vyasa—the Divine Mother, the destroyer of rebirth, the showerer of the nectar of Advaita and consisting of eighteen chapters—upon Thee, O Bhagavad Gita! O affectionate Mother! I meditate. 1**

नमोऽस्तु ते व्यास विशालबुद्धे फुल्लारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र ।
येन त्वया भारततैलपूर्णः प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥ २

*namo 'stu te vyāsa viśāla buddhe*
*phullāravindāyata patra netra* ।
*yena tvayā bhārata tailapūrṇaḥ*
*prajvālito jñānamayaḥ pradīpaḥ* ॥

नमः *namaḥ* salutations अस्तु *astu* be ते *te* unto thee व्यास *vyāsa* O Vyasa विशालबुद्धे *viśāla buddhe* of profound intellect फुल्ल अरविन्द आयत पत्र नेत्र *phulla aravinda āyata patra netra* with eyes like the petals of a full-blown lotus येन *yena* which त्वया *tvayā* by thee भारत तैल पूर्णः *bhārata taila pūrṇaḥ* full of the oil of the Mahabharata प्रज्वालितः *prajvālitaḥ* lighted ज्ञानमयः *jñānamayaḥ* consisting of wisdom प्रदीपः *pradīpaḥ* lamp

**Salutations to thee, O Vyasa of profound intellect and with eyes like the petals of a full-blown lotus, by whom the lamp of knowledge, filled with the oil of the Mahabharata, has been lighted. 2**

प्रपन्नपारिजाताय तोत्रवेत्रैकपाणये ।
ज्ञानमुद्राय कृष्णाय गीतामृतदुहे नमः ॥ ३

*prapanna pārıjātāya totravetraıka pānaye* ।
*jñāna mudrāya kṛsnāya gitāmṛta duhe namah* ॥

प्रपन्न पारिजाताय *prapanna pārıjātāya* the Parıjata, or the Kalpataru the bestower of all desıres, for those who take refuge ın Hım तोत्र वेत्र एक पाणये *totra vetra eka pānaye* who holds a cane ın one hand ज्ञान मुद्राय *jñāna mudrāya* the holder of knowledge symbol कृष्णाय *krṣnāya* to Krıshna गीता अमृत दुहे *gītā amṛta duhe* the mılker of the Gıta-nectar नमः *namaḥ* salutatıons

**Salutations to Krishna, the Parijata or the Kalpataru, the bestower of all desires of those who take refuge in Hım, the holder of the cane in one hand, the holder of Jnanamudra (the symbol of knowledge) the milker of the Gita-nectar. 3**

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥ ४

*sarvopanısado gāvo dogdhā gopāla nandanaḥ* ।
*pārtho vatsaḥ sudhır bhoktā dugdham gītāmṛtam mahat* ॥

सर्व उपनिषद *sarva upanısadaḥ* all the Upanıshads गाव. *gāvah* the cows दोग्धा *dogdhā* the mılker गोपाल नन्दन *gopāla nandanah* Krıshna, the cowherd boy पार्थः *pārthaḥ* Partha वत्स *vatsah* the calf सुधी *sudhıḥ* men of purıfied ıntellect भोक्ता *bhoktā* the drınkers दुग्धम् *dugdham* the mılk गीता *gītā* Gıta अमृतम *amrtam* nectar महत् *mahat* the supreme

**All the Upanishads are the cows, the milker is Krishna, the cowherd boy, Partha is the calf, men of**

**purified intellect are the drinkers, the milk is the supreme nectar of the Gita. 4**

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥ ५

*vasudeva sutaṁ devaṁ kaṁsa cāṇūra mardanaṁ* ।
*devakī paramānandaṁ kṛṣṇam vande jagad guruṁ* ॥

वसुदेव सुतम् *vasudeva sutaṁ* the son of Vasudeva देवम् *devaṁ* god कंस चाणूर मर्दनम् *kaṁsa cāṇūra mardanaṁ* the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura देवकी परम आनन्दम् *devakī parama ānandaṁ* the supreme bliss of Devaki (mother of Krishna) कृष्णम् *kṛṣṇam* to Krishna वन्दे *vande* I salute जगद् गुरुम् *jagad guruṁ* the world teacher

**I salute Lord Krishna, the world teacher, the son of Vasudeva, the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura, the supreme bliss of Devaki. 5**

भीष्मद्रोणतटा जयद्रथजला गान्धारनीलोत्पला
शल्यग्राहवती कृपेण वहनी कर्णेन वेलाकुला ।
अश्वत्थामविकर्णघोरमकरा दुर्योधनावर्तिनी
सोत्तीर्णा खलु पाण्डवै रणनदी कैवर्तकः केशवः ॥ ६

*bhīṣma droṇa taṭā jayadratha jalā gāndhāra nīlotpalā*
*śalya grāhavatī kṛpeṇa vahanī karṇena velākulā* ।
*aśvatthāma vikarṇa ghora makarā duryodhanāvartinī*
*sottīrṇā khalu pāṇḍavai raṇa nadī kaivartakaḥ keśavaḥ* ॥

भीष्म द्रोण तटा *bhīṣma droṇa taṭā* with Bhishma and Drona as the banks जयद्रथ जला *jayadratha jalā* with Jayadratha as the water गान्धार नील उत्पला *gāndhāra*

*nīla utpalā* with the king of Gandhara as the blue water-lily शल्य ग्राहवती *śalya grāhavati* with Salya as the crocodile कृपेण वहनी *krpena vahanī* with Kripa as the current कर्णेन वेल आकुला *karnena vela ākulā* with Karna as the billow अश्वत्थाम विकर्ण घोर मकरा *aśvatthāma vikarna ghora makarā* with Asvatthama and Vikarna as the terrible alligators दुर्योधन आवर्तिनी *duryodhana āvartini* with Duryodhana as the whirlpool स *sah* that उत्तीर्णा *uttīrnā* crossed over खलु *khalu* indeed पाण्डवैः *pāndavaiḥ* by Pandavas रणनदी *rana nadi* the battle-river कैवर्तकः *kaivartakaḥ* the ferry-man केशवः *keśavaḥ* Kesava (Krishna)

**The battle-river whose banks were Bhishma and Drona, whose water was Jayadratha, whose blue-lily was the king of Gandhara, whose crocodile was Salya, whose current was Kripa, whose billow was Karna, whose terrible alligators were Asvatthama and Vikarna, whose whirlpool was Duryodhana — even such was crossed over by the Pandavas, with Kesava as the *ferry-man*.** ***6***

पाराशर्यवचः सरोजममलं गीतार्थगन्धोत्कटं
नानाख्यानककेसरं हरिकथासंबोधनाबोधितम् ।
लोके सज्जनषट्पदैरहरहः पेपीयमानं मुदा
भूयाद्भारतपङ्कजं कलिमलप्रध्वंसिनः श्रेयसे ॥ ७

*pārāśarya vacah sarojam amalam*
*gitārtha gandhotkatam*
*nānākhyānaka kesaram hari kathā*
*sambodhanā bodhitam* ।

*loke sajjana ṣaṭpadair aharahaḥ*
*pepīyamānaṁ mudā*
*bhūyād bhārata paṅkajaṁ kalimala*
*pradhvaṁsinaḥ śreyase* ||

पाराशर्य वचः सरोजम् *pārāśarya vacaḥ sarojam* born in the lake of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa) अमलम् *amalaṁ* spotless गीता अर्थ गन्ध उत्कटम् *gītā artha gandha utkaṭaṁ* sweet with the fragrance of the meaning of Gita नाना आख्यानक केसरम् *nānā ākhyānaka kesaraṁ* with many stories as its stamens हरिकथा संबोधन आबोधितम् *harikathā saṁbodhana ābodhitaṁ* fully opened by the discourses on Hari लोके *loke* in the world सज्जन षट्पदैः *sajjana ṣaṭpadaiḥ* by the bees of good men अहः अहः *ahaḥ ahaḥ* day by day पेपीयमानम् *pepīyamānaṁ* drunk मुदा *mudā* joyously भूयात् *bhūyāt* may be भारत पंकजम् *bhārata paṅkajaṁ* the lotus of the Mahabharata कलिमल प्रध्वंसिनः *kalimala pradhvaṁsinaḥ* of the destroyer of the dirt of Kali (to us) श्रेयसे *śreyase* for the supreme good

**May this lotus of the Mahabharata, born in the lake of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa), sweet with the fragrance of the meaning of Gita, with many stories as its stamens, fully opened by the discourses on Hari, the destroyer of the sins of Kali, and drunk joyously day by day, by the bees of good men in the world become the bestower of good to us.** 7

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् ।
यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानंदमाधवम् ॥ ८

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate giriṁ* |
*yatkṛpā taṁ ahaṁ vande paramānanda mādhavaṁ* ||

मूकम् *mūkam* the dumb करोति *karoti* makes वाचालम् *vācālam* eloquent पङ्गुम् *pangum* the cripple लङ्घयते *langhayate* crosses गिरिम् *girim* mountain यत्कृपा *yatkrpā* whose grace तम् *tam* that अहम् *aham* I वन्दे *vande* salute परमानन्दमाधवम् *paramānanda mādhavam* Madhava, the Source of Supreme Bliss

**I salute that Madhava, the Source of Supreme Bliss, whose grace makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple cross mountains.** **8**

यं ब्रह्मा वरुणेन्द्ररुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवैः
वेदैः साङ्गपदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं सामगाः ।
ध्यानावस्थित तद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो
यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥ ९

*yam brahmā varunendra rudra marutah*
*stunvanti divyaih stavaih*
*vedaih sānga pada kramopanisadair gāyanti*
*yam sāmagāh* ।
*dhyānāvasthita tadgatena manasā*
*paśyanti yam yogino*
*yasyāntam na viduh surāsuraganā*
*devāya tasmai namah* ॥

यम् *yam* whom ब्रह्मा *brahmā* Brahma वरुण *varunah* Varuna इन्द्र *indrah* Indra रुद्र *rudrah* Rudra मरुत- *marutah* the Maruts स्तुन्वन्ति *stunvanti* praise दिव्यैः *divyaih* divine स्तवैः *stavaih* with hymns वेदैः *vedaih* by Vedas स अङ्ग पदक्रम उपनिषदैः *sa anga padakrama upanisadaih* with their Angas in the Pada and Krama methods and by the Upanishads गायन्ति *gāyanti* sing यम् *yam* whom सामगाः *sāmagāh* the Sama-chanters ध्यान अवस्थित

तद्गतेन मनसा *dhyāna avasthita tadgatena manasā* with the mind absorbed in him through meditation पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* see यम् *yaṁ* whom योगिनः *yoginaḥ* the yogis यस्य *yasya* whose अन्तम् *antaṁ* end न *na* not विदुः *viduḥ* know सुर असुरगणाः *sura asura gaṇāḥ* the hosts of Devas and Asuras देवाय *devāya* God तस्मै *tasmai* to that नमः *namaḥ* salutations

**Salutations to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise with divine hymns, whom the Sama-chanters sing by Vedas and their Angas, in the Pada and Krama methods, and by the Upanishads, whom the yogis see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose end the hosts of Devas and Asuras know not.** 9

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[illegible] *dhyāna avasthita tadgatena manasā* with the mind absorbed in him through meditation पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* see यं *yam* whom योगिनः *yoginaḥ* the yogis यस्य *yasya* whose अन्तम् *antam* end न *na* not विदुः *viduḥ* know सुर असुरगणाः *sura asura gaṇāḥ* the hosts of Devas and Asuras देवाय *devāya* God तस्मै *tasmai* to that नमः *namaḥ* salutations

Salutations to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise with divine hymns, whom the Sama-chanters sing by Vedas and their Angas, in the Pada and Krama methods, and by the Upanishads, whom the yogis see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose end the hosts of Devas and Asuras know not. 9

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# THE BHAGAVAD GITA

## अर्जुनविषादयोग:

## ARJUNA VISHADA YOGA — THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

### CHAPTER I

Dhrtarashtra's Query—Sanjaya Defines the Arrays—Arjuna's Impatience—Arjuna Beholds the Venerable Ones — Arjuna's Conflict—Arjuna's Fallacy

**Dhrtarashtra's Query — 1**

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच
धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥ १

धर्म-क्षेत्रे कुरु-क्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।
मामका पाण्डवा च एव किम् अकुर्वत सजय ॥

*dhrtarāstra uvāca*
*dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ ।*
*māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś cai 'va kim akurvata samjaya ॥*

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच *dhrtarāstra uvāca* Dhrtarashtra said धर्मक्षेत्रे *dharmakṣetre* the field of religions कुरुक्षेत्रे *kurukṣetre* at Kurukshetra समवेता *samavetāḥ* gathered together युयुत्सव. *yuyutsavaḥ* desirous to fight मामकाः *māmakāḥ* my people पाण्डवा *pāndavāh* the sons of Pandu च *ca* and एव *eva* also किम् *kim* what अकुर्वत *akurvata* did do संजय *samjaya* O Sanjaya

**Dhrtarashtra said**

**Gathered together at Kurukshetra, the field of religious activities, what, O Sanjaya, did my war-inclined sons and those of Pandu do?**

Sanjaya is the name of Dhrtarashtra's minister. Literally the word Sanjaya means: he whose victory is decisive. True to his name, this minister had mastery over his mind and senses. He was not given to partiality or predisposition. Truthfulness and straightforwardness were his characteristics. Because of these virtues the sage Vyasa temporarily bestowed on him, the power to cognize intuitively all that took place at the war-front and he communicated them faithfully to his blind monarch. This was why Dhrtarashtra put this question to Sanjaya.

The conflict between the contending cousin-groups was too sharp to be squared up. One stood for righteousness and possessed legitimate claim to the kingdom. The other was out to usurp it, the rights of the rival, by foul means. In this circumstance, war became inevitable. Dhrtarashtra knew this; but blind as he was physically, in mind also he was such. He, therefore, resorted to wishful thinking. The field of Kurukshetra has had many holy sacrifices performed on it. It was therefore saturated with a spiritual atmosphere; and so there was the possibility of Yudhishthira, the eldest of the Pandava brothers, being influenced by this divine atmosphere and beating a retreat into the forest in preference to a sanguine warfare. In that case, the odium of usurping the kingdom and waging an unrighteous war would not fall on his covetous and deceitful sons. This was the mental climate in which this fond question was raised by Dhrtarashtra, the embodiment of indiscrimination.

However long a stone may remain immersed in a river, it does not allow even a small particle of water to percolate into it Even so the man steeped in worldliness does not permit any ethical or spiritual feeling gain access to his heart

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

**Sanjaya Defines the Arrays — 2 20**

सञ्जय उवाच

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
आचार्यमुपसङ्गम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डव अनीकम् वि-ऊढम् दु-र्योधन तदा ।
आचार्यम् उप-स-गम्य राजा वचनम् अब्रवीत ॥

*samjaya uvāca*

*dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā* ।
*ācāryam upasamgamya rājā vacanam abravīt* ॥

सजय उवाच *samjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said

दृष्ट्वा *dṛstvā* having seen तु *tu* indeed पाण्डवानीकम् *pāṇḍavānīkam* the army of the Pandavas व्यूढम् *vyūḍham* in battle array दुर्योधन *duryodhanah* Duryodhana तदा *tadā* then आचार्यम् *ācāryam* the teacher उपसगम्य *upasamgamya* having approached राजा *rājā* the king वचनम् *vacanam* speech अब्रवीत् *abravīt* said

**Sanjaya said**

**Now seeing the Pandava army arrayed properly, the Prince Duryodhana drew near his preceptor Drona and spoke these words: 2**

It is but natural that a frightened child hastens to his parent for protection and encouragement Even so, Duryodhana drew himself at a psychological moment to his preceptor who was held by him, like a parent

There was a purpose in Sanjaya's pointedly using the word 'seeing'. Duryodhana was fancying all along that it might not be possible for his rivals to mobilize an army strong enough to face his own huge force allied with those of several other kings. But what had happened was contrary to his calculation. He was a bit perturbed and unnerved over the position. The name Duryodhana has the implied meaning 'he who is hard to combat with.' But his guilty conscience had started a moral conflict within him. Mental defeat in him was a prelude to the actual defeat that came in the war.

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३

पश्य एताम् पाण्डु-पुत्राणाम् आचार्य महतीम् चमूम् ।
वि-ऊढाम् द्रुपद-पुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धी-मता ॥

*paśyai 'tāṁ pāṇḍuputrāṇām ācārya mahatīṁ camūm |*
*vyūḍhāṁ drupada putreṇa tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā ||*

पश्य *paśya* behold एताम् *etāṁ* this पाण्डुपुत्राणाम् *pāṇḍuputrāṇām* of the sons of Pandu आचार्य *ācārya* O teacher महतीम् *mahatīṁ* great चमूम् *camūm* army व्यूढाम् *vyūḍhāṁ* marshalled द्रुपदपुत्रेण *drupata putreṇa* son of Drupada तव शिष्येण *tava śiṣyeṇa* by your disciple धीमता *dhīmatā* talented

**Behold, O master, this mighty army of the sons of Pandu, marshalled by the son of Drupada, your talented disciple.** 3

Duryodhana flings words of insolence at his preceptor even as a scorpion would sting its saviour.

The perturbed prince means to say that his master had made a silly mistake in having chosen to teach archery to the sons of Pandu and that of Drupada They have now arrayed themselves, determined to fight and vanquish none other than their own master But for Drona's blunder this mishap might not have come about This is how Duryodhana laments over the unexpected development

The army mobilized by the Pandavas seems in the eyes of Duryodhana, larger than what it actually is, due to his being disturbed over the coming catastrophe This did not augur well for him

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ ४

अत्र शूरा महा-इष्वासा भीम अर्जुन-समा युधि ।
युयुधान विराट च द्रुपद च महा-रथ ॥

*atra śūrā maheṣvāsā bhīmārjunasamā yudhi* ।
*yuyudhāno virāṭaś ca drupadaś ca mahā rathaḥ* ॥

अत्र *atra* here शूरा *śūrāḥ* peers महेष्वासा *maheṣvāsāḥ* mighty archers भीमार्जुनसमा *bhīmārjuna samāḥ* equal to Bhima and Arjuna युधि *yudhi* in battle युयुधान *yuyudhānaḥ* Yuyudhana विराट *virāṭaḥ* Virata च *ca* and द्रुपद *drupadaḥ* Drupada च *ca* and महारथ *mahārathaḥ* of the great car

**Here are mighty archers, peers in warfare to heroic Arjuna and Bhima; Yuyudhana, Virata and Drupada the great chariot-warrior. 4**

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित् कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥ ५

धृष्ट-केतुः चेकितानः काशि-राजः च वीर्य-वान् ।
पुरु-जित् कुन्ति-भोजः च शैब्यः च नर-पुम्-गवः ॥

*dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānaḥ kāśirājaś ca vīryavān |*
*purujit kuntibhojaś ca śaibyaś ca narapuṁgavaḥ ||*

धृष्टकेतुः *dhṛṣṭaketuḥ* Dhrshtaketu चेकितानः *cekitānaḥ* Chekitana काशिराजः *kāśirājaḥ* King of Kasi च *ca* and वीर्यवान् *vīryavān* valiant पुरुजित् *purujit* Purujit कुन्तिभोजः *kuntibhojaḥ* Kuntibhoja च *ca* and शैब्यः *śaibyaḥ* son of Saibya च *ca* and नरपुंगवः *narapuṁgavaḥ* the best of men

**Dhrshtaketu, Chekitana and the valiant King of Kasi, Purujit, Kuntibhoja and Saibya, the best among men; 5**

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६

युधा-मन्युः च वि-क्रान्तः उत्तम-ओजाः च वीर्य-वान् ।
सौभद्रः द्रौपदेयाः च सर्वे एव महा-रथाः ॥

*yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta uttamaujāś ca vīryavān |*
*saubhadro draupadeyāś ca sarva eva mahārathāḥ ||*

युधामन्युः *yudhāmanyuḥ* Yudhamanyu च *ca* and विक्रांतः *vikrāntaḥ* the courageous उत्तमौजाः *uttamaujāḥ* Uttamauja च *ca* and वीर्यवान् *vīryavān* the brave सौभद्रः *saubhadraḥ* the son of Subhadra द्रौपदेयाः *draupadeyāḥ* the sons of Draupadi च *ca* and सर्वे *sarve* all एव *eva* even महारथाः *mahārathāḥ* great car-warriors

**The courageous Yudhamanyu, the brave Uttamauja, Saubhadra and the sons of Draupadi - all being great chariot-warriors. 6**

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान् ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७

अस्माकम् तु विशिष्टा ये तान् नि-बोध द्विज-उत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञा-अर्थम् तान् ब्रवीमि ते ॥

*asmākam tu viśiṣṭā ye tān nibodha dvijottama* ।
*nāyakā mama sainyasya samjñārtham tān bravīmi te* ॥

अस्माकम् *asmākam* ours तु *tu* also विशिष्टा *viśiṣṭāḥ* distinguished chiefs ये *ye* who तान् *tān* those निबोध *nibodha* know (thou) द्विजोत्तम *dvijottama* (O) best among the twice-born नायका *nāyakāḥ* the leaders मम *mama* my सैन्यस्य *sainyasya* of the army संज्ञार्थम् *samjñārtham* for information तान् *tān* them ब्रवीमि *bravīmi* I speak ते *te* to thee

**Know you, O the best of the twice-born, all those who are our distinguished chiefs, the leaders of my army; I name them for your information. 7**

Duryodhana censures his master in a subtle and concealed manner His reprimand comes to this 'However capable you may be in teaching the science of warfare, you are after all, a Brahmana, given to peaceful life, and a bit timid too, by nature It is too much to expect of you to be courageous in this war with the Pandavas Still, be not afraid We too have mighty warriors on our side '

भवान् भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिञ्जयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८

भवान् भीष्म च कर्ण च कृप च समितिम् जय ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्ण च सौमदत्ति तथा एव च ॥

*bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca kṛpaś ca samitiṁjayaḥ |*
*aśvatthāmā vikarṇaś ca saumadattis tathai 'va ca ||*

भवान् *bhavān* yourself भीष्मः *bhīṣmaḥ* Bhishma च *ca* and कर्णः *karṇaḥ* Karna च *ca* and कृपः *kṛpaḥ* Kripa च *ca* and समितिंजयः *samitiṁjayaḥ* victorious in war अश्वत्थामा *aśvatthāmā* Asvatthama, son of Drona विकर्णः *vikarṇaḥ* Vikarna च *ca* and सौमदत्तिः *saumadattiḥ* the son of Somadatta तथा *tathā* thus एव *eva* even च *ca* and

**Your venerable self, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa the victorious in fight, Asvatthama, Vikarna and Saumadatti as well. 8**

Duryodhana now feels that, in his excitement, he has transgressed the limit in censuring the preceptor. As if in atonement for it he places Drona first in the list of the heroes on his side, relegating Bhishma, the Field Marshal himself, to the second rank. Further he designates Kripa, the brother-in-law of Drona as, the fierce in fight. The thoughtful Prince now quickly resorts to flattery, the last infirmity of even great men, to square up the awkward situation created by himself.

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९

अन्ये च बहवः शूराः मद्-अर्थे त्यक्त-जीविताः ।
नाना-शस्त्र-प्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्ध-विशारदाः ॥

*anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā mad arthe tyakta jīvitāḥ |*
*nānā śastra praharaṇāḥ sarve yuddha viśāradāḥ ||*

अन्ये *anye* others च *ca* and बहवः *bahavaḥ* many शूराः *śūrāḥ* heroes मदर्थे *mad arthe* for my sake

त्यक्तजीविता *tyakta jivitāh* who have given up their lives नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणा *nānā śastra praharanāh* armed with various weapons and missiles सर्वे *sarve* all युद्धविशारदा. *yuddhaviśāradāh* well skilled in battle

**And there are yet other heroes well trained in warfare, who, equipped with manifold weapons and missiles, are ready to lay down their lives for my sake. 9**

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ १०

अ-पर्याप्तम् तत् अस्माकम् बलम् भीष्म-अभि-रक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तम् तु इदम् एतेषाम् बलम् भीम-अभि-रक्षितम् ॥

*aparyāptam tad asmākam balam bhīsmābhi raksitam |*
*paryāptam tvidam etesām balam bhīmābhi raksitam ||*

अपर्याप्तम् *aparyāptam* unlimited तत् *tat* that अस्माकम् *asmākam* ours बलम् *balam* army भीष्म अभिरक्षितम् *bhīsma abhi raksitam* marshalled by Bhishma पर्याप्तम *paryāptam* insufficient तु *tu* while इदम् *idam* this एतेषाम् *etesām* their बलम् *balam* army भीम अभिरक्षितम *bhima abhi raksitam* marshalled by Bhima

**Multitudinous is our army marshalled by Bhishma, but meagre is the army of theirs marshalled by Bhima.**

*Vainglory is paramount in the demoniac when* the days of their destruction draw near Words of self-aggrandizement they egotistically indulge in, contain very often a meaning derogatory to themselves This tragic irony of fate is found in the utterance of Duryodhana He is right in estimating the valour of Bhishma superior to that of Bhima, his

sworn enemy. But he unwittingly spells ruin to himself when he delights in depicting Bhima's army as meagre while praising that of Bhishma as multitudinous. He uses the terms *paryāptaṁ* and *aparyāptaṁ* respectively. *Paryāptaṁ* not only means meagre, it also means limited, compact and well disciplined. *Aparyāptaṁ*, on the other hand, means unlimited, unwieldy and indisciplined. This makes a world of difference between the two forces. The strength and victory of an army do not depend on its bulk, but on its training and team-spirit. Though limited in number, the Pandava forces are trim and equal to any eventuality. The Kaurava forces are on the other hand, promiscuous and placed together pellmell. Duryodhana's boast, therefore, stands self-condemned.

Again, the ethical excellence of Bhishma ever remains beyond the ken of the worldly-minded Duryodhana. This divinely-gifted and invincible man has no doubt consented to wage war wholeheartedly for the Kauravas. There is no sacrifice greater than this that an upright man can make. But at heart he knew that dharma alone was going to triumph in the end. Still, true to his word, he chooses to champion the cause of the wicked, only to prove that no power on earth or in heaven can make adharma victorious. Bhishma is in no way tainted by taking sides with the wicked, because of his being supremely above selfishness. The tenet 'be active in the world, but be not of the world,' is exemplified in his perplexing character.

As a corollary to the utterance of Duryodhana, there is a fact to be taken into account, in regard to the lives of nations. That nation thrives best, which is compact, well-knit, trained and tuned to an ideal. The other nation, which is multitudinous, loosely-knit and divergent in outlook, lingers and vegetates.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथा-भागम् अव-स्थिताः ।
भीष्मम् एव अभि-रक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्वे एव हि ॥

*ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu yathā bhāgam avasthitāḥ* ।
*bhīṣmam evā 'bhirakṣantu bhavantaḥ sarva eva hi* ॥

अयनेषु *ayaneṣu* in the divisions of the army च *ca* and सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* in all यथा भागम् *yathā bhāgam* according to division अवस्थिताः *avasthitāḥ* being stationed भीष्मम् *bhīṣmam* Bhishma एव *eva* alone अभिरक्षन्तु *abhi raksantu* protect भवन्त *bhavantaḥ* ye सर्वे *sarve* all एव *eva* even हि *hi* indeed

**Now all of you assume positions in your respective divisions and protect Bhishma alone, by all means. 11**

Words always take the colour of a person's mind, wholesome or unwholesome. Duryodhana's instructions, put in other words, come to this: 'Since you all *have no initiative and are even* undependable, at least take directions from me and be of some use.'

तस्य सञ्जनयन् हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२

तस्य सं-जनयन् हर्षं कुरु-वृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंह-नादम् वि-नद्य उच्चैः शङ्खम् दध्मौ प्रताप-वान् ॥

*tasya saṁjanayan harṣaṁ kuru vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ* ।
*siṁha nādaṁ vinadyo 'ccaiḥ śaṅkhaṁ dadhmau pratāpavān* ॥

तस्य *tasya* his (Duryodhana's) संजनयन् *saṁjanayan* causing हर्षम् *harṣaṁ* joy कुरुवृद्धः *kuru vṛddhaḥ* oldest of the Kurus पितामहः *pitāmahaḥ* grandfather सिंहनादम् *siṁha nādaṁ* lion's roar विनद्य *vinadya* having sounded उच्चैः *uccaiḥ* loudly शंखम् *śaṅkhaṁ* a conch दध्मौ *dadhmau* blew प्रतापवान् *pratāpavān* the mighty

**In order to embolden Duryodhana, Bhishma the mighty grandsire, the oldest of the Kurus, now raised a lion's roar and blew his conch. 12**

There is no statesmanship whatsoever in the impudent remarks of the unimaginative Duryodhana. He brags impertinently and drifts towards damping the war zeal of his allies and comrades. The prudent Field Marshal Bhishma takes note of this deteriorating situation and comes to prompt rescue. He roars like a lion and blows the conch indicating that war is declared. This act, calculated to induce spirit in the mind of Duryodhana, amounts to, according to the codes of warfare, aggression by the Kauravas.

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३

ततः शङ्खाः च भेर्यः च पणव-आनक-गोमुखाः ।
सहसा एव अभि-अहन्यन्त सः शब्दः तुमुलः अभवत् ॥

*tataḥ śaṅkhāś ca bheryaś ca paṇavānaka gomukhāḥ* |
*sahasai 'vā 'bhyahanyanta sa śabdas tumulo 'bhavat* ||

ततः *tatah* then शंखाः *śankhāḥ* conchs च *ca* and भेर्यः *bheryah* kettledrums च *ca* and पणव आनक गोमुखाः *paṇava ānaka gomukhāh* tabors, drums and cow-horns सहसा एव *sahasā eva* quite suddenly, अभ्यहन्यन्त *abhyahanyanta* blared forth सः *saḥ* that शब्दः *śabdaḥ* sound तुमुलः *tumulaḥ* tremendous अभवत् *abhavat* was

**Then suddenly blared forth conchs and kettledrums, tabors and trumpets and cow-horns; and tremendous was that noise. 13**

This is the uproar created by the warriors of the Kaurava group.

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥ १४

ततः श्वेतैः हयैः युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
मा-धवः पाण्डव च एव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्र-दध्मतुः ॥

*tataḥ śvetair hayair yukte mahati syandane sthitau* |
*mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaś cai 'va divyau śankhau pradadhmatuḥ* ||

ततः *tataḥ* then श्वेतैः *śvetaih* with white हयैः *hayaih* horses युक्ते *yukte* yoked महति *mahati* magnificent स्यन्दने *syandane* in the chariot स्थितौ *sthitau* seated माधवः *mādhavah* Madhava पाण्डवः *pāndavaḥ* Pandava the son of Pandu च *ca* and एव *eva* also दिव्यौ *divyau* divine शंखौ *śankhau* conchs प्रदध्मतुः *pradadhmatuḥ* blew

Then, seated as Madhava and Pandava were in their magnificent chariot yoked to white steeds, they gracefully blew their divine conchs. 14

Madhava is one of the thousand names attributed to Vishnu the preserving phase of Brahman. *mā* is Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity; *dhava* is the groom or the owner thereof. Vishnu is thus the Lord of Lakshmi. Madhava here refers to Sri Krishna, the embodied aspect of Vishnu. The grace of the Lord of Lakshmi has now come upon the Pandava brothers. It indicates that this righteous group will very soon have Vijaya Lakshmi — the goddess of victory and Rajya Lakshmi—the goddess of kingdom bestowed on it by the grace of Madhava.

Pandava means the son of Pandu. Any one of the five brothers may aptly be addressed as Pandava. Here this appellation applies to Arjuna in particular as he is always associated with Sri Krishna. The mythology of Bhagavatapurana has it that the sages Nara and Narayana of yore later incarnated as Arjuna and Sri Krishna.

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५

पाञ्चजन्यम् हृषीक-ईशः देव-दत्तम् धनम्-जयः ।
पौण्ड्रम् दध्मौ महा-शङ्खम् भीम कर्मा वृक-उदरः ॥

*pāñcajanyaṁ hṛṣīkeśo devadattaṁ dhanaṁjayaḥ* ।
*pauṇḍraṁ dadhmau mahā śaṅkhaṁ bhīma karmā vṛkodaraḥ* ॥

पाञ्चजन्यम् *pāñcajanyaṁ* (the conch named) Panchajanya हृषीकेशः *hṛṣīkeśaḥ* (the Lord of the senses)

Krishna देवदत्तम् *devadattam* (the conch named) Devadatta धनंजय *dhananjayah* (the victor of wealth) Arjuna पौण्ड्रम् *paundram* (the conch named) Paundra दध्मौ *dadhmau* blew महाशङ्खम् *mahā śankham* great conch भीमकर्मा *bhīma karmā* doer of terrible deeds वृकोदरः *vṛkodaraḥ* (having the belly of a wolf) Bhima

**Panchajanya was blown by Hrishikesa, and Devadatta by Dhananjaya. Vrikodara of terrible exploits blew his great conch, Paundra; 15**

Hrishikesa means the Lord of the mind and the senses. This term connotes Sri Krishna in particular. He is ever the master of the mind and the senses. In no act of his, has he been carried away by the turbulent senses. He alone who is the master of the senses is capable of executing any undertaking nobly and virtuously

The word Dhananjaya means conqueror of wealth Arjuna went round the country and appropriated the hidden and stagnant wealths of the inactive rulers, and utilized them for public weal. He is therefore rightly addressed Dhananjaya.

Vrikodara literally means one having the belly of the wolf. Here this term refers to Bhima, because of his wolf-like characteristics The wolf's belly is concave and not bulged out. This beast is noted for its keen hunger and great digestive power. And Bhima too has these traits, and so he is called Vrikodara. A person of strong digestive power is very smart in all his doings

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६

अनन्त-विजयम् राजा कुन्ती-पुत्रः युधि-स्थिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवः च सुघोष-मणिपुष्पकौ ॥

*anantavijayaṁ rājā kuntī putro yudhiṣṭhiraḥ* ।
*nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca sughoṣa maṇipuṣpakau* ॥

अनन्तविजयम् *anantavijayaṁ* (the conch named) Anantavijaya राजा *rājā* the king कुन्तीपुत्रः *kuntī putraḥ* son of Kunti युधिष्ठिरः *yudhiṣṭhiraḥ* Yudhishthira नकुलः *nakulaḥ* Nakula सहदेवः *sahadevaḥ* Sahadeva च *ca* and सुघोष मणिपुष्पकौ *sughoṣa maṇipuṣpakau* conchs named Sughosha and Manipushpaka.

**The King Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, blew Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva blew Sughosha and Manipushpaka. 16**

Yudhishthira is a king to the core. Being seated on the throne or being sent into exile in the forest makes no difference in his bearing. Under all circumstances he manifests royal grace and magnanimity. He is therefore described as Raja. He is now the uncrowned king on the battle-field.

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७

काश्यः च परम-इष्वासः शिखण्डी च महा-रथः ।
धृष्ट-द्युम्नः विराटः च सात्यकिः च अ-पराजितः ॥

*kāśyaś ca parameṣvāsaḥ śikhaṇḍī ca mahā rathaḥ* ।
*dhṛṣṭadyumno virāṭaś ca sātyakiś cā 'parājitaḥ* ॥

काश्यः *kāśyaḥ* Kasya, the King of Kasi च *ca* and परमेष्वासः (परम इष्वासः) *parameṣvāsaḥ (parama iṣvāsaḥ)*

an excellent archer शिखण्डी *sikhandı* Sikhandı च *ca* and महारथ *mahā rathah* mighty car-warrior धृष्टद्युम्न *dhṛstadyumnah* Dhrshtadyumna विराट *virātah* Virata च *ca* and सात्यकि *sātyakih* Satyaki च *ca* and अपराजित *aparājitaḥ* unconquered

**And the Ruler of Kasi, the adept archer and Sikhandi the great chariot-warrior, Dhrshtadyumna and Virata and Satyaki, the invincible; 17**

Sikhandi being a eunuch was devoid of beard and moustache Bhishma had taken a vow that he would lay down arms if he confronted a woman or a eunuch Sikhandi therefore, very soon became the immediate cause of his defeat

Dhrshtadyumna means one who cannot be successfully encountered by anybody

**द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।**
**सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान् दध्मुः पृथक् पृथक् ॥ १८**

द्रुपद द्रौपदेया च सवश पृथिवी पते ।
सौभद्र च महा बाहुः शङ्खान् दध्मु पृथक् पृथक् ॥

*drupado draupadeyās ca sarvasah prthivi pate |*
*saubhadras ca mahābāhuḥ sankhān dadhmuḥ prthak-prthak ||*

द्रुपद् *drupadaḥ* Drupada द्रौपदेया *draupadeyāh* the sons of Draupadı च *ca* and सर्वश *sarvasah* all पृथिवीपते *prthivipate* O Lord of Earth सौभद्रः *saubhadrah* son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu) च *ca* and महाबाहु *mahā bāhuḥ* the mighty armed शङ्खान् *sankhān* conchs दध्मु· *dadmuḥ* blew पृथक् पृथक् *prthak prthak* respective

**O Ruler of the Earth! Drupada and the sons of Draupadi, and the mighty armed son of Subhadra, all these as well blew their several conchs. 18**

There is a purpose in Sanjaya addressing Dhrtarashtra as 'O Ruler of the Earth'. To preserve a country ever in peace or to involve it in ruinous warfare, is all in the hands of the ruling monarch. Now the die is cast. Events are heading to a catastrophe. "What is going to be your decision?" This seems to be the implied question.

स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ १९

सः घोषः धार्तराष्ट्राणाम् हृदयानि वि-अदारयत ।
नभः च पृथिवीम् च एव तुमुलः वि-अनु-नादयन् ॥

*sa ghoṣo dhārtarāṣṭrāṇāṁ hṛdayāni vyadārayat* ।
*nabhaś ca pṛthivīṁ cai 'va tumulo vyanunādayan* ॥

सः *saḥ* that घोषः *ghoṣaḥ* uproar धार्तराष्ट्राणाम् *dhārtarāṣṭrāṇāṁ* Dhrtarashtra's party हृदयानि *hṛdayāni* hearts व्यदारयत् *vyadārayat* rent नभः *nabhaḥ* sky च *ca* and पृथिवीं *pṛthivīṁ* earth च *ca* and एव *eva* also तुमुलः *tumulaḥ* tumultuous व्यनुनादयन् *vyanunādayan* resounding

**Filling the earth and the sky with reverberation that tumultuous uproar rent the hearts of the sons of Dhrtarashtra. 19**

Those who feel their cause just, have the courage and muster up for action. The Pandavas exhibit such a disposition through their pealing bugle-call. That uproar seems to be abnormally

*pāthe samagre 'sampūrne tato 'rdham pātham ācaret* ।
*tadā godānajam punyam labhate nā 'tra samśayaḥ* ॥

**If the whole of it cannot be recited, half of it may be recited; through that act the aspirant acquires merit on a par with the gift of a cow. There is no doubt about it. 11**

The merit in the gift of a cow consists in giving it to a spiritual man intent solely on Self-culture. Cherishing a spiritual man in this manner is equivalent to cherishing spirituality.

त्रिभागं पठमानस्तु गङ्गास्नानफलं लभेत् ।
षडंशं जपमानस्तु सोमयागफलं लभेत् ॥ १२

*tribhāgam pathamānas tu gangāsnāna phalam labhet* ।
*ṣadamśam japamānas tu somayāgaphalam labhet* ॥

**He who recites a third part acquires the merit obtained by bathing in the Ganges. He who recites a sixth part gets the fruit of the Soma-sacrifice 12**

एकाध्यायं तु यो नित्यं पठते भक्तिसंयुतः ।
रुद्रलोकमवाप्नोति गणो भूत्वा वसेच्चिरम् ॥ १३

*ekā 'dhyāyam tu yo nityam pathate bhakti samyutaḥ* ।
*rudra lokam avāpnoti gano bhūtvā vasec ciram* ॥

**He who reads even a chapter a day with devotion gains the Rudraloka and lives there long having become an attendant on Siva. 13**

अध्यायं श्लोकपादं वा नित्यं यः पठते नरः ।
स याति नरतां यावन्मन्वन्तरं वसुन्धरे ॥ १४

*adhyāyam ślokapādam vā nityam yaḥ pathate naraḥ* ।
*sa yāti naratām yāvan manvantaram vasundhare* ॥

## THE APPELLATIONS OF ARJUNA

### AS DEFINED IN THE GITA

| | |
|---|---|
| Anagha | — the sinless one. |
| Arjuna | — the pure in nature. |
| Bharatarishabha | — the best of the Bharatas. |
| Bharatasattama | — ,, |
| Bharatasreshta | — ,, |
| Dhananjaya | — the conqueror of wealth |
| Gudakesa | — the conqueror of sleep. |
| Kapidhvaja | — he whose ensign is a monkey. |
| Kaunteya | — the son of Kunti |
| Kiriti | — he who wears a diadem. |
| Kurunandana | — the joy of the Kurus. |
| Kurusreshta | — the best of the Kurus. |
| Mahabahu | — the mighty-armed. |
| Pandava | — the son of Pandu |
| Partha | — the son of Pritha, Kunti. |
| Parantapa | — the scorcher of foes |
| Purushavyaghra | — the tiger of men. |
| Savyasachin | — one who could shoot arrows with the left hand also. |

penetrating into the hearts of the Kauravas, because of their guilty conscience Even the reprimand of a child is bound to touch an offender to the quick

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपिध्वजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसम्पाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ॥ २०
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अथ वि-अव-स्थितान् दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान् कपि ध्वज ।
प्र-वृत्ते शस्त्र-सपात धनु उद्-यम्य पाण्डव ॥
हृषीक-ईश तदा वाक्यम् इदम् आह मही-पते ।

*atha vyavasthitān drstvā dhārtarāstrān kapidhvajah* ।
*pravrtte śastrasampāte dhanur udyamya pāndavah* ॥
*hrsīkeśam tadā vākyam idam āha mahīpate* ।

अथ *atha* now व्यवस्थितान् *vyavasthitān* standing arrayed दृष्ट्वा *drstvā* seeing धार्तराष्ट्रान् *dhārtarāstrān* Dhrtarashtra's party कपिध्वजः *kapidhvajah* monkey-ensigned प्रवृत्ते *pravrtte* about to begin शस्त्रसंपाते *śastra sampāte* discharge of weapons धनुः *dhanuh* bow उद्यम्य *udyamya* having taken पाण्डवः *pāndavah* the son of Pandu हृषीकेशम् *hrstkeśam* to Hrishikesa, तदा *tadā* then वाक्यम् *vākyam* words इदम् *idam* this आह *āha* said महीपते *mahīpate* O Lord of Earth

**Then, O Ruler of the Earth, seeing Dhrtarashtra's host being positioned and the fighting about to commence, Pandava, whose ensign badge is Hanuman, lifting his bow spoke the following words to Krishna.** 20

## THE NAMES OF SRI KRISHNA

### EMPLOYED IN THE GITA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Achyuta | — | He who does not deviate fro His divine nature. |
| Arisudana | — | He who destroys the enemies. |
| Bhagavan | — | He who is endowed with powe virtue, fame, glory, detachme and freedom. |
| Govinda | — | The knower of the Jivatman. |
| Hrishikesa | — | The Lord of the senses. |
| Jagannivasa | — | The abode of the universe. |
| Janardana | — | He who is adored by devo for the fulfilment of their desi |
| Kesava | — | He who has beautiful hair. T Lord of the Trinity. |
| Kesinisudana | — | He who slaughtered Kesin. |
| Krishna | — | The dark one. *The remover of sin.* He who is Brahman. |
| Madhava | — | The Lord of Lakshmi. |
| Madhusudana | — | He who destroyed the demon named Madhu. |
| Purushottama | — | The Supreme Person. |
| Varshneya | — | He who belongs to the Vrshni clan. |
| Vasudeva | — | The son of Vasudeva. The Immanent in all. |
| Vishnu | — | The all pervading One. |
| Yadava | — | He who comes of the Yadu clan. |
| Yogeswara | — | The Lord of Yoga. |

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अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥ २२

सेनयोः उभयोः मध्ये रथम् स्थापय मे अ-च्युत ॥
यावत् एतान् निर्-ईक्षे अहम् योद्धु-कामान् अव-स्थितान् ।
कैः मया सह योद्धव्यम् अस्मिन् रण-समुद्यमे ॥

*arjuna uvāca*
*senayor ubhayor madhye ratham sthāpaya me 'cyuta* ॥
*yāvad etān nirīkṣe 'ham yoddhu kāmān avasthitān* ।
*kair mayā saha yoddhavyam asmin raṇasamudyame* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said: सेनयोः *senayoḥ* of the armies उभयोः *ubhayoḥ* of both मध्ये *madhye* in the middle रथम् *rathaṁ* car स्थापय *sthāpaya* place मे *me* my अच्युत *acyuta* O Achyuta यावत् *yāvat* while एतान् *etān* these निरीक्षे *nirīkṣe* behold अहम् *aham* I योद्धु कामान् *yoddhu kāmān* desirous to fight अवस्थितान् *avasthitān* standing कैः *kaiḥ* with whom मया *mayā* by me सह *saha* together योद्धव्यम् *yoddhavyam* must be fought अस्मिन् *asmin* in this रणसमुद्यमे *raṇasamudyame* eve of battle

**Arjuna said:**

**Place my chariot, O Achyuta, between the two armies so that I may behold the war-minded that stand here, with whom I must wage this war. 21-22**

Achyuta is a name of Vishnu. Here it refers to Sri Krishna. He who does not deviate from his divine glory—this is the meaning of the word.

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भीष्म-द्रोण-प्रमुखतः सर्वेषाम् च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्य एतान् सम्-अव-इतान् कुरून् इति ॥

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*evam ukto hṛṣīkeśo guḍākeśena bhārata* ।
*senayor ubhayor madhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam* ॥
*bhīṣma droṇa pramukhataḥ sarveṣāṁ ca mahīkṣitām* ।
*uvāca pārtha paśyai 'tān samavetān kurūn iti* ॥

सञ्जय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

एवम् *evaṁ* thus उक्तः *uktaḥ* addressed हृषीकेशः *hṛṣīkeśaḥ* Hrishikesa गुडाकेशेन *guḍākeśena* by Gudakesa भारत *bhārata* O Bharata सेनयोः *senayoḥ* of the armies उभयोः *ubhayoḥ* of both मध्ये *madhye* in the middle स्थापयित्वा *sthāpayitvā* having stationed रथोत्तमम् *rathottamam* best of chariots

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः *bhīṣma droṇa pramukhataḥ* in front of Bhishma and Drona सर्वेषाम् *sarveṣāṁ* of all च *ca* and महीक्षिताम् *mahīkṣitām* rulers of the earth उवाच *uvāca* said पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha पश्य *paśya* behold एतान् *etān* those समवेतान् *samavetān* gathered कुरून् *kurūn* Kurus इति *iti* thus

**Sanjaya said:**

**Thus requested by Gudakesa, Hrishikesa, O Bharata, having placed the best of chariots in between the two armies; 24**

**Facing Bhishma and Drona and all the rulers of the earth, spoke, "O, Partha, behold all the Kurus gathered together." 25**

Arjuna is here termed as Gudakesa, which means the one who has control over sleep. When,

तान् समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ॥ २७
कृपया परयाऽऽविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

तान् समीक्ष्य सः कौन्तेयः सर्वान् बन्धून् अव-स्थितान् ॥
कृपया परया आ-विष्टः वि-सीदन् इदम् अब्रवीत् ।

*tān samīkṣya sa kaunteyaḥ sarvān bandhūn avasthitān* ॥
*kṛpayā parayā 'viṣṭo viṣīdann idam abravīt* ।

तान् *tān* these समीक्ष्य *samīkṣya* having seen सः *saḥ* he कौन्तेयः *kaunteyaḥ* Kaunteya सर्वान् *sarvān* all बंधून् *bandhūn* relatives अवस्थितान् *avasthitān* standing कृपया *kṛpayā* by pity परया *parayā* deep आविष्टः *āviṣṭaḥ* filled विषीदन् *viṣīdan* sorrowfully इदम् *idaṁ* this अब्रवीत् *abravīt* said

**He, the son of Kunti, gazing at those kinsmen posted in positions spoke thus in sadness, filled as he was with choking compassion. 27**

A crisis now rapidly brews in the mind of Arjuna. He becomes a victim to a change of attitude. Stout-heartedness gives place to soft-heartedness, manliness to effeminacy. It is therefore apt to style him now as the son of a woman, Kunti. The hero who entered the battle-field with the attitude of the enemy of the wicked, now suddenly develops the attitude of a kinsman. This change over in the disposition is not the outcome of discrimination, but the very lack of it. Loss of discrimination, which is born of ignorance, is verily the gateway to the fall and degradation of man.

योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ २३

योत्स्यमानान् अव-ईक्षे अहम् ये एते अत्र सम्-आ-गताः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दु-बुद्धे· युद्धे प्रिय-चिकीर्षव ॥

*yotsyamānān avekse 'ham ya ete 'tra samāgatāh* ।
*dhārtarāstrasya durbuddher yuddhe priyacikīrsavah* ॥

योत्स्यमानान् *yotsyamānān* with the object of fighting अवेक्षे *avekṣe* observe अहम् *aham* I यः *yah* who एते *ete* those अत्र *atra* here समागताः *samāgatāh* assembled धार्तराष्ट्रस्य *dhārtarāstrasya* of the son of Dhrtarashtra दुर्बुद्धेः *durbuddheh* of the evil-minded युद्धे *yuddhe* in battle प्रियचिकीर्षवः *priyacikīrṣavah* wishing to please

**I desire to discern those that throng here to fight, intent on pleasing in battle the evil-minded son of Dhrtarashtra. 23**

*Inordinate zeal* is very *often the precursor* of a soul-damping depression. Arjuna is unwittingly subjecting himself to this unwanted vacillation. Hence his hankering to scan his foes.

**Arjuna Beholds the Venerable Ones — 24-27**

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान् समवेतान्कुरूनिति ॥ २५

एवम् उक्त. हृषीक-ईश· गुडाका-ईशेन भारत ।
सेनयो· उभयो मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथ-उत्तमम् ॥

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ २९
गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

वेपथुः च शरीरे मे रोम-हर्षः च जायते ॥
गाण्डीवम् स्रंसते हस्तात् त्वक् च एव परि-दह्यते ।

*vepathuś ca śarīre me romaharṣaś ca jāyate ||*
*gāṇḍīvaṁ sraṁsate hastāt tvak cai 'va paridahyate |*

वेपथुः *vepathuḥ* shivering च *ca* and शरीरे *śarīre* in body मे *me* my रोमहर्षः *romaharṣaḥ* horripilation च *ca* and जायते *jāyate* arise गांडीवम् *gāṇḍīvaṁ* Gandiva स्रंसते *sraṁsate* slips हस्तात् *hastāt* from (my) hand त्वक् *tvak* (my) skin च *ca* and एव *eva* also परिदह्यते *paridahyate* burns all over

**My body quivers and my hair stands on end. The bow Gandiva slips from my hand and my skin burns all over.** 29

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥ ३०
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च शक्नोमि अव-स्थातुम् भ्रमति इव च मे मनः ॥
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि वि-परीतानि के-शव ।

*na ca śaknomy avasthātuṁ bhramatī 'va ca me manaḥ ||*
*nimittāni ca paśyāmi viparītāni keśava |*

न *na* not च *ca* and शक्नोमि *śaknomi* I am able अवस्थातुम् *avasthātuṁ* to stand भ्रमति इव *bhramati iva* seems whirling च *ca* and मे *me* my मनः *manaḥ* mind निमित्तानि *nimittāni* omens च *ca* and पश्यामि *paśyāmi* I see विपरीतानि *viparītāni* adverse केशव *keśava* O Kesava

**I am unable to stand; my mind whirls as it were; and Kesava, I see adverse omens.** 30

where and how long to sleep, were all under the sway of his will. Only he who can manipulate his mind as he likes, can gain mastery over sleep. Even one such is going to succumb very soon to *an overwhelming situation. A hint to this effect* is thrown here.

तत्रापश्यत् स्थितान् पार्थः पितॄनथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातॄन् पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥ २६
श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।

तत्र अपश्यत् स्थितान् पार्थः पितॄन् अथ पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान् मातुलान् भ्रातॄन् पुत्रान् पौत्रान् सखीन् तथा ॥
श्वशुरान् सुहृदः च एव सेनयो उभयोः अपि ।

*tatrā 'paśyat sthitān pārthaḥ pitṝn atha pitāmahān* ।
*ācāryān mātulān bhrātṝn putrān pautrān sakhīms tathā*॥
*śvaśurān suhṛdaś cai 'va senayor ubhayor api* ।

तत्र *tatra* there अपश्यत् *apaśyat* saw स्थितान् *sthitān* stationed पार्थः *pārthaḥ* Partha पितॄन् *pitṝn* fathers अथ *atha* also पितामहान् *pitāmahān* grandfathers आचार्यान् *ācāryān* teachers मातुलान् *mātulān* maternal uncles भ्रातॄन् *bhrātṝn* brothers पुत्रान् *putrān* sons पौत्रान् *pautrān* grandsons सखीन् *sakhīn* friends तथा *tathā* too श्वशुरान् *śvaśurān* fathers-in-law सुहृदः *suhṛdaḥ* friends च *ca* and एव *eva* also सेनयोः *senayoḥ* in armies उभयोः *ubhayoḥ* (in) both अपि *api* also

**Standing there Partha then beheld in both the armies, paternal uncles, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, cousins, sons, grandsons, comrades, fathers-in-law and benefactors.** **26**

न च श्रेयः अनु-पश्यामि हत्वा स्व-जनम् आहवे ॥
न काङ्क्षे वि-जयम् कृष्ण न च राज्यम् सुखानि च ।

*na ca śreyo 'nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanam āhave ||*
*na kāṅkṣe vijayaṁ kṛṣṇa na ca rājyaṁ sukhāni ca |*

न *na* not च *ca* and श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* good अनुपश्यामि *anupaśyāmi* (I) see हत्वा *hatvā* killing स्वजनम् *svajanaṁ* our people आहवे *āhave* in battle न *na* not काङ्क्षे *kāṅkṣe* I desire विजयम् *vijayaṁ* victory कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna न *na* not च *ca* and राज्यम् *rājyaṁ* kingdom सुखानि *sukhāni* pleasures च *ca* and

**I do not foresee any good ensuing from the slaughter of kinsmen in battle. O Krishna, I hanker not for victory or empire or pleasures even. 31**

Indifference to the acquisition of wordly prosperity is an unfailing mark of ethical and spiritual progress. But what has come upon Arjuna is anything but indifference. He has been all along diligently and systematically preparing himself for war. Subsequent delusion in him masquerades as mental attainment. His very perplexed state of mind betrays it.

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥ ३२

किम् नः राज्येन गोविन्द किम् भोगैः जीवितेन वा ॥

*kiṁ no rājyena govinda kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā ||*

किम् *kiṁ* what नः *naḥ* to us राज्येन *rājyena* by kingdom गोविन्द *govinda* O Govinda किम् *kiṁ* what भोगैः *bhogaiḥ* by pleasures जीवितेन *jīvitena* life वा *vā* or

**Of what avail to us is kingdom or enjoyment or even life, O Govinda? 32**

Arjuna's Conflict — 28-30

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥ २८
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

दृष्ट्वा इमम् स्व-जनम् कृष्ण युयुत्सुम् सम्-उप-स्थितम् ॥
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखम् च परि-शुष्यति ।

*arjuna uvāca*

*dṛṣṭve 'maṁ svajanaṁ kṛṣṇa yuyutsuṁ samupasthitam*॥
*sīdanti mama gātrāṇi mukham ca pariśuṣyati* ।

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen इमम् *imaṁ* these स्वजनम् *svajanaṁ* kinsmen कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna युयुत्सुम् *yuyutsuṁ* eager to fight समुपस्थितम् *samupasthitam* arrayed सीदन्ति *sīdanti* fail मम *mama* my गात्राणि *gātrāṇi* limbs मुखम् *mukhaṁ* mouth च *ca* and परिशुष्यति *pariśuṣyati* is parching

**Arjuna said:**

**Seeing these my kinsmen, collected here prompted by war, my limbs fail me, O Krishna, and my mouth is parched up. 28**

The word Krishna has three significant meanings:—

1. He who is dark blue in colour indicating his infinitude.

2. *Krish* means existence, and *na* means bliss. He who is existence - knowledge - bliss is Krishna.

3 He who saves the devotees from distress.

आचार्याः *ācāryāḥ* teachers पितरः *pitaraḥ* fathers पुत्राः *putrāḥ* sons तथा *tathā* thus एव *eva* also च *ca* and पितामहाः *pitāmahāḥ* grandfathers मातुलाः *mātulāḥ* maternal uncles श्वशुराः *śvaśurāḥ* fathers-in-law पौत्राः *pautrāḥ* grandsons श्यालाः *śyālāḥ* brothers-in-law संबन्धिनः *saṁbandhinaḥ* relatives तथा *tathā* as well as

**Teachers, fathers, sons as well as grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives. 34**

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥ ३५

एतान् न हन्तुम् इच्छामि घ्नतः अपि मधु-सूदन ।
अपि त्रैलोक्य-राज्यस्य हेतोः किम् नु मही-कृते ॥

*etān na hantum icchāmi ghnato 'pi madhusūdana* ।
*api trailokya rājyasya hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahīkṛte* ॥

एतान् *etān* these न *na* not हन्तुम् *hantum* to kill इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) wish घ्नतः अपि *ghnataḥ api* even if killed (by them) मधुसूदन *madhusūdana* O Madhusudana अपि *api* even त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य *trailokya rājyasya* dominion over the three worlds हेतोः *hetoḥ* for the sake of किम् *kiṁ* how नु *nu* then महीकृते *mahīkṛte* for the sake of earth

**Though myself slain by them, I would not, O Madhusudana, seek to slay them even for the sake of domination over the three worlds, how then for the earth? 35**

The three worlds refer to the earth, the heaven and the intermediate region. "O Krishna, it is to your everlasting glory that you are addressed as

The name Kesava has three meanings.—

1. The destroyer of the demon Kesin.
2. He who has beautiful hair on the head.
3. K=Brahma, the creator; A=Vishnu; Isa=Rudra.

He who is the embodiment of the Vedic Trinity-the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer.

Body and mind are interrelated. Change in the one leads to a corresponding change in the other. Arjuna's mental calibre has gone down. The trying situation has laid bare the incompleteness within. Signs of it are evident both in body and mind. A change in the subject presents itself as a seeming change in the object. The same world presents itself as good or bad according to the transformation one undergoes within. While militant in attitude Arjuna saw no omens; but while hesitant he sees any number of them. It is all, more subjective than objective, born of confusion.

Omens are not all true, or, all untrue. As forecasting is possible in regard to the weather, foreboding also has its place in nature. It is the way of the weak, the wavering and the vegetating to seek guidance from omens. The active, the dutiful and the discerning have neither the time nor disposition to run after them.

**Arjuna's Fallacy — 31-46**

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ ३१
न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।

the bitterly hated cousins; with drawn swords openly they attempted murder of the legitimate heirs to the throne; deceitfully they tried to deprive the Pandavas of their kingdom, wealth and wife. Death is the reward that dharma deals to the *ātatāyins* even if they happen to be learned. But Arjuna overwhelmed with sentimental commiseration, seeks to save instead of slaughtering them in open war.

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्स्वबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥ ३७

तस्मात् न अर्हाः वयम् हन्तुम् धार्तराष्ट्रान् स्व-बान्धवान् ।
स्व-जनम् हि कथम् हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम मा-धव ॥

*tasmān nā'rhā vayaṁ hantuṁ*
*dhārtarāṣṭrān svabāndhavān* ।
*svajanaṁ hi kathaṁ hatvā*
*sukhinaḥ syāma mādhava* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore न *na* (are) not अर्हाः *arhāḥ* justified वयम् *vayaṁ* we हन्तुम् *hantuṁ* to kill धार्तराष्ट्रान् *dhārtarāṣṭrān* the sons of Dhṛtarashtra स्वबान्धवान् *svabāndhavān* our relatives स्वजनम् *svajanaṁ* kinsmen हि *hi* indeed कथम् *kathaṁ* how हत्वा *hatvā* having killed सुखिनः *sukhinaḥ* happy स्याम *syāma* may (we) be माधव *mādhava* Madhava

**We should not therefore slay the sons of Dhṛtarashtra our kinsmen; for, how can we, O Madhava, killing our own kinsmen, be happy? 37**

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३८

The word Govinda is very appropriate here. *go* in Samskrit means the living being; and *vinda* means the knower thereof. This name of Vishnu applies here to Sri Krishna. He being the knower of the minds of people, he alone can rightly solve their life problems.

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥ ३३

येषाम् अर्थे काङ्क्षितम् न राज्यम् भोगाः सुखानि च ।
ते इमे अव-स्थिताः युद्धे प्राणान् त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥

*yeṣām arthe kāṅkṣitam no rājyam bhogāḥ sukhāni ca* ।
*ta ime 'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṁs tyaktvā dhanāni ca* ॥

येषाम् *yeṣām* of whose अर्थे *arthe* sake काङ्क्षितम् *kāṅkṣitaṁ* (is) desired नः *naḥ* by us राज्यम् *rājyaṁ* kingdom भोगाः *bhogāḥ* enjoyment सुखानि *sukhāni* pleasures च *ca* and ते *te* they इमे *ime* these अवस्थिताः *avasthitāḥ* stand युद्धे *yuddhe* in battle प्राणान् *prāṇān* life त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned धनानि *dhanāni* wealth च *ca* and

**Those for whose sake we seek kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures, they stand here in battle, staking life and property.** 33

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्राः तथैव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा ॥ ३४

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्राः तथा एव च पितामहाः ।
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः सम्बन्धिनः तथा ॥

*ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ tathai'va ca pitāmahāḥ* ।
*mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ pautrāḥ śyālāḥ saṁbandhinas tathā* ॥

This Arjuna who pleads so much now for the saving of a family, does not yet know that he himself is going to exterminate that very family in a few days to come. Goaded by greed of kingdom the Kauravas want to kill the Pandavas. Prompted by attachment to kith and kin Arjuna wants to spare the desperadoes. Are greed and attachment the only guiding forces in life?

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नम् अधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ ४०

कुल-क्षये प्र-नश्यन्ति कुल-धर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलम् कृत्स्नम् अ-धर्मः अभि-भवति उत ॥

*kulakṣaye praṇaśyanti kuladharmāḥ sanātanāḥ |*
*dharme naṣṭe kulaṁ kṛtsnam adharmo 'bhibhavaty uta||*

कुलक्षये *kulakṣaye* in the destruction of a family प्रणश्यन्ति *praṇaśyanti* perish कुलधर्माः *kuladharmāḥ* family religious rites सनातनाः *sanātanāḥ* immemorial धर्मे *dharme* spirituality नष्टे *naṣṭe* being destroyed कुलम् *kulaṁ* the family कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnam* the whole अधर्मः *adharmaḥ* impiety अभिभवति *abhibhavati* overcomes उत *uta* indeed

**In the decline of a family, its time-honoured usages perish; with the perishing of sacred rites impiety overtakes the entire family. 40**

अधर्माभिभवात् कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥ ४१

अ-धर्म-अभिभवात् कृष्ण प्र-दुष्यन्ति कुल-स्त्रियः ।
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्ण-संकरः ॥

Madhusudana — the killer of the wicked demon, Madhu. But it would be to my everlasting ignominy as the killer of the kith and kin, if I ever indulged in this warfare "—this is what Arjuna implies.

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।
पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः ॥ ३६

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान् नः का प्रीतिः स्यात् जन-अर्दन ।
पापम् एव आ-श्रयेत् अस्मान् हत्वा एतान् आततायिनः ॥

*nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ kā prītiḥ syāj janārdana ।*
*pāpam evā'śrayed asmān hatvai'tān ātatāyinaḥ ॥*

निहत्य *nihatya* having slain धार्तराष्ट्रान् *dhārtarāṣṭrān* sons of Dhrtarashtra नः *naḥ* to us का *kā* what प्रीतिः *prītiḥ* pleasure स्यात् *syāt* may be जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana पापम् *pāpaṁ* sin एव *eva* only आश्रयेत् *āśrayet* would take hold अस्मान् *asmān* to us हत्वा *hatvā* having killed एतान् *etān* these आततायिनः *ātatāyinaḥ* felons

**What delight can we derive, O Janardana, by doing away with these sons of Dhrtarashtra? Sin only will accrue to us by slaying these desperadoes. 36**

Janardana is yet another popular name of Sri Krishna, meaning 'a person who is worshipped by people for prosperity and emancipation.'

An *ātatāyin* is here translated as a desperado. There is no criminal offence to which he is stranger. The rival cousins have all been confirmed desperadoes. They secretly set fire to the residence where the Pandavas were expected to be sleeping; they surreptitiously tried to poison the food of

The departed happen to stay for sometime in the region of the manes, before they resume another birth. Libations offered to them by their descendants have a toning effect on their dormant psyche.

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकारकैः ।
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ ४३

दोषैः एतैः कुल-घ्नानां वर्ण-संकर-कारकैः ।
उद्-साद्यन्ते जाति-धर्माः कुल-धर्माः च शाश्वताः ॥

*doṣair etaiḥ kulaghnānāṁ varṇa saṁkarakārakaiḥ* ।
*utsādyante jātidharmāḥ kuladharmāś ca śāśvatāḥ* ॥

दोषैः *doṣaiḥ* by evil deeds एतैः *etaiḥ* (by) these कुलघ्नानाम् *kulaghnānāṁ* of the family destroyers वर्णसंकरकारकैः *varṇasaṁkarakārakaiḥ* causing intermingling of castes उत्साद्यन्ते *utsādyante* are destroyed जातिधर्माः *jāti dharmāḥ* caste religious rites कुलधर्माः *kula dharmāḥ* family religious rites च *ca* and शाश्वताः *śāśvatāḥ* eternal

**The everlasting caste-virtues and the family-merits get ruined because of the caste-confusion created by the bad deeds of the family-destroyers. 43**

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
नरकेऽनियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ ४४

उद्-सन्न-कुल-धर्माणां मनुष्याणाम् जन-अर्दन ।
नरके अ-नियतम् वासः भवति इति अनु-शुश्रुम ॥

*utsanna kula dharmāṇāṁ manuṣyāṇāṁ janārdana* ।
*narake 'niyataṁ vāso bhavatī 'ty anuśuśruma* ॥

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणाम् *utsanna kula dharmāṇāṁ* whose family religious practices are destroyed मनुष्याणाम्

यदि-अपि एते न पश्यन्ति लोभ-उपहत-चेतसः ।
कुल-क्षय-कृतम् दोषम् मित्र-द्रोहे च पातकम् ॥

*yady apy ete na paśyanti lobhopahata cetasaḥ* ।
*kulakṣayakṛtaṁ doṣam mitradrohe ca pātakam* ॥

यद्यपि *yadyapi* though एते *ete* these न *na* not पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* see लोभोपहतचेतसः *lobhopahata cetasaḥ* with intelligence overpowered by greed कुलक्षयकृतम् *kula-kṣayakṛtam* in the destruction of families दोषम् *doṣam* evil मित्रद्रोहे *mitradrohe* in hostility to friends च *ca* and पातकम् *pātakam* sin

**Although these, with understanding clouded by greed, see no guilt in the extermination of a family, no crime in hostility to friends,** **38**

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ॥ ३९

कथम् न ज्ञेयम् अस्माभिः पापात् अस्मात् नि-वर्तितुम् ।
कुल-क्षय-कृतम् दोषम् प्र-पश्यद्भिः जन-अर्दन ॥

*kathaṁ na jñeyam asmābhiḥ pāpād asmān nivartitum*
*kulakṣaya kṛtam doṣaṁ prapaśyadbhir janārdana* ॥

कथम् *kathaṁ* why न *na* not ज्ञेयम् *jñeyam* should be learnt अस्माभिः *asmābhiḥ* by us पापात् *pāpāt* from sin अस्मात् *asmāt* this निवर्तितुम् *nivartitum* to turn away कुलक्षयकृतम् *kulakṣaya kṛtam* in the destruction of a family दोषम् *doṣam* evil प्रपश्यद्भिः *prapaśyadbhiḥ* clearly seeing जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana

**Why should we not learn to recoil from such a sin, O Janardana, we who see evil in the destruction of a family?** **39**

यदि *yadi* if माम् *mām* me अप्रतीकारम् *apratīkāram* unresisting अशस्त्रम् *aśastram* unarmed शस्त्रपाणयः *śastra-pāṇayaḥ* weapons-in-hand धार्तराष्ट्राः *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ* the sons of Dhrtarashtra रणे *raṇe* in the battle हन्युः *hanyuḥ* should slay तत् *tat* that मे *me* of me क्षेमतरम् *kṣemataram* better भवेत् *bhavet* would be

**Should the sons of Dhrtarashtra with weapons in hand slay me, unresisting and unarmed in the battle, that would indeed be better for me. 46**

The despondency of Arjuna now culminates in desperate resignation. This state is just the opposite of the self-surrender to the Lord.

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वाऽर्जुनः सङ्ख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥ ४७

एवम् उक्त्वा अर्जुनः संख्ये रथ-उपस्थे उप-अविशत् ।
वि-सृज्य स-शरम् चापम् शोक-सं-विग्न-मानसः ॥

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*evam uktvā 'rjunaḥ saṁkhye rathopastha upāviśat ।*
*visṛjya saśaraṁ cāpaṁ śokasaṁvignamānasaḥ ॥*

सञ्जय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

एवम् *evaṁ* thus उक्त्वा *uktvā* having said अर्जुनः *arjunaḥ* Arjuna संख्ये *saṁkhye* in the battle रथोपस्थः *rathopasthaḥ* on the seat of the chariot उपाविशत् *upāviśat* sat down विसृज्य *visṛjya* having cast away सशरम् *saśaraṁ* arrow चापम् *cāpaṁ* bow शोकसंविग्नमानसः *śoka saṁvigna mānasaḥ* with a mind distressed with sorrow

*adharmābhibhavāt kṛsna pradusyanti kula striyah* ।
*strīsu dustāsu vārsneya jāyate varnasamkarah* ॥

अधर्म अभिभवात् *adharma abhi bhavāt* from the prevalence of impiety कृष्ण *kṛsna* O Krishna प्रदुष्यन्ति *pradusyanti* become corrupt कुलस्त्रिय *kula striyah* the women of the family स्त्रीषु *strīsu* in women दुष्टासु *dustāsu* (being) corrupt वार्ष्णेय *vārsneya* O Varshneya जायते *jāyate* arises वर्णसंकर *varnasamkarah* caste admixture

**With the growth of impiety, O Krishna, the family women become unchaste; and women getting corrupted, O Varshneya, caste admixture ensues. 41**

All these evils which Arjuna foresees would actually come about if the wicked be allowed to thrive in society.

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ ४२

सम्-कर, नरकाय एव कुल-घ्नाना कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितर हि एषाम् लुप्त-पिण्ड-उदक क्रिया ॥

*samkaro narakāyai 'va kulaghnānām kulasya ca* ।
*patanti pitaro hy esām lupta pindodaka kriyāh* ॥

संकर *samkarah* confusion नरकाय *narakāya* for the hell एव *eva* also कुलघ्नानाम् *kulaghnānām* of the slayers of the family कुलस्य *kulasya* of the family च *ca* and पतन्ति *patanti* fall पितर *pitarah* the forefathers हि *hi* verily एषां *eṣām* their लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रिया *lupta pindodaka kriyāh* deprived of the offerings of rice-ball and water

**Hell is verily the lot of the family and family destroyers through caste admixture; for, their ancestors fall deprived of manes-cakes and libations. 42**

# सांख्ययोगः

## SAMKHYA YOGA — THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

## CHAPTER II

The Message of Strength — Arjuna Declines to Fight against the Revered Ones — Spiritual Anguish — The Harbinger of Grace — Consistency is Yoga — Atman is Immortal — Nature of Death — Feelings Pertain to Body — The Real and the Unreal — Be not Attached to Karma — Rebirth of the Embodied — Atman is Super-mundane — The Materialistic Standpoint — Atman Transcends Mind and Speech — Swerve not from Duty — Transform Karma into KarmaYoga — The Way of the Worldly — The Key to Yoga — The Enlightened Defined.

सञ्जय उवाच

तं तथा कृपयाऽऽविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १

तम् तथा कृपया आ-विष्टम् अश्रु-पूर्ण-आकुल-ईक्षणम् ।
वि-सीदन्तम् इदम् वाक्यम् उवाच मधु-सूदनः ॥

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*taṁ tathā kṛpayā'viṣṭam aśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam* ।
*viṣīdantam idaṁ vākyam uvāca madhusūdanaḥ* ॥

संजय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

तम् *taṁ* to him तथा *tathā* thus कृपया. *kṛpayā* with pity आविष्टम् *āviṣṭam* overcome अश्रुपूर्ण आकुल ईक्षणम् *aśrupūrṇa ākula īkṣaṇam* with eyes filled with tears and agitated विषीदन्तम् *viṣīdantam* despondent इदम् *idaṁ* this वाक्यम् *vākyam* speech उवाच *uvāca* spoke मधुसूदनः *madhusūdanaḥ* Madhusudana

Sanjaya said:

**Madhusudana spoke these words to him who was thus overwhelmed with compassion and drowned in distress, and whose eyes were drenched in tears of despondency.** 1

*manusyānām* of the men जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana नरके *narake* in hell अनियतम् *aniyatam* for unknown period वास *vāsah* dwelling भवति *bhavati* is इति *iti* thus अनुशुश्रुम *anuśuśruma* we have heard

**We have heard, O Janardana, that hell is verily the long lasting abode of the men whose family religious practices have been broken. 44**

अहो बत महत् पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥ ४५

अहो बत महत् पापम् कर्तुम् वि अव सिता वयम् ।
यत् राज्य सुख-लोभेन हन्तुम् स्व-जनम् उद् यता ॥

*aho bata mahat pāpam kartum vyavasitā vayam |*
*yad rājya sukha lobhena hantum svajanam udyatāh ||*

अहो बत *aho bata* alas महत् *mahat* great पापम् *pāpam* sin कर्तुम् *kartum* to do व्यवसिता *vyavasitāh* prepared वयम् *vayam* we यत् *yat* that राज्यसुखलोभेन *rājya sukha lobhena* by the greed of pleasure of kingdom हन्तुम् *hantum* to kill स्वजनम् *svajanam* kinsmen उद्यता *udyatāh* prepared

**Goaded by the greed of the pleasures of a kingdom, we are, alas, bent on perpetrating the great sin of killing our kinsmen. 45**

यदि मामप्रतीकारम् अशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युः तन्मे क्षेमतर भवेत् ॥ ४६

यदि माम् अ-प्रतीकारम् अ शस्त्रम् शस्त्र पाणय ।
धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्यु तत् मे क्षेम-तरम् भवेत् ॥

*yadi mām apratikāram aśastram śastrapānayah |*
*dhārtarāṣṭrā rane hanyuh tan me kṣemataram bhavet ||*

mences here. In the very first utterance in these two stanzas, the core of the everlasting message is delivered.

Pithily putting the fundamental at the outset is characteristic of a classical literature. An example may be cited.

ओं पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

"Om. The Invisible is the Whole, the Visible is the Whole. From the Whole, the visible universe has come out. The Whole remains ever Itself even though the infinite universe has come out of It." This is the fundamental in the Upanishads. Nothing but the elaboration of this truism is found in all of them. The Lord's teachings are also after this pattern.

The term *ārya* in our sacred books does not refer to any race or stock. It only refers to a highly evolved and cultured man. It connotes much more than referring to somebody as a perfect gentleman. An Aryan is one who scrupulously adheres to dharma. Manu Smriti has it that children born of parents imbued with self-control and austerity are Aryans; and those others born of lust are non-Aryans. The function of the Vedanta philosophy is to induce man to become Aryan in all respects. Arjuna in whom manliness was writ large all along, has now suddenly and unexpectedly sunk into unmanliness. The Lord rouses him up from this set-back.

Sanjaya said :

So saying, overwhelmed with sorrow in the battle-field, Arjuna sat on the seat of his chariot, abandoning his bow and arrows. 47

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम
प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām*
*yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde arjunaviṣāda*
*yogo nāma prathamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the first discourse designated:

THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

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उत्तिष्ठ *uttiṣṭha* stand up परंतप *paraṁtapa* O scorcher of foes

**Yield not, O Partha, to feebleness. It does not befit you. Cast off this petty faint-heartedness. Wake up, O vanquisher of foes! 3**

The man who fails to face a crisis, speaking and acting irrelevantly, is denounced as a dolt. But Arjuna is not made of that inferior stuff; the training that he has received is superb. He is literally a vanquisher of foes. Poles apart are the feebleness of a coward and the boldness of Arjuna who successfully combated Siva, the Great God. The Lord simply chides him for the momentary weakness that has come upon his comrade and seeks to make him whole again.

The manifest world is comprised of two categories — *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, the noumenon and the phenomenon. One becomes feeble to the extent one depends on the phenomenon; one becomes manly and courageous to the extent one identifies oneself with the noumenon. This identification is *Atmabodham*. Strength and *Atmabodham* are identical. Weakness is condemned downright by the Lord. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः This Atman cannot be attained by the weak — is the Upanishadic pronouncement. And the message of Sri Krishna is based on this fundamental principle. To be firm of body, formidable of mind, constant of character — excellences like these are all born of strength. This world and the next one too are for the strong alone. Right conduct originates from strength; straightforwardness comes from it;

Though the word *kṛpā* is translated as compassion, Arjuna is not really endowed with this divine quality. He alone who is the master of his mind can extend compassion to the distressed and seek to allay their sorrows. But now Arjuna himself is in dire need of redemption from distress; the question, therefore, of his showing mercy to others does not arise.

**The Message of Strength—2-3**

श्री भगवानुवाच
कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यम् अकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २

कुत: त्वा कश्मलम् इदम् वि-समे स उप-स्थितम् ।
अन्-आर्य-जुष्टम् अ-स्वर्ग्यम् अ-कीर्ति-करम् अर्जुन ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*
*kutas tvā kaśmalam idam visame samupasthitam* ।
*anāryajustam asvargyam akīrtikaram arjuna* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

कुत: *kutah* whence त्वा *tvā* upon thee कश्मलम् *kaśmalam* dejection इदम् *idam* this विषमे *visame* in perilous strait समुपस्थितम् *samupasthitam* comes अनार्यजुष्टम् *anāryajustam* unworthy (unaryanlike) अस्वर्ग्यम् *asvargyam* heaven excluding अकीर्तिकरम् *akīrtikaram* disgraceful अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Whence has this unmanly, heaven-barring and shameful dejection come upon you, at this juncture, O Arjuna? 2**

The Lord who was silent all this while now deigns to speak. The Gita proper, therefore, com-

Arjuna said:

**O slayer of Madhu, O slayer of foes, how shall I with arrows counter-attack Bhishma and Drona, who are worthy of worship? 4**

O Krishna, it befits one like you being adored as Madhusudana and as Arisudana; for, your doing away with a demon and a sworn enemy is justifiable. But my position is quite different. I dare not even debate with the venerable elders I behold here. How then shall I give battle to them, with weapons in hand? Will I not be condemned as one who waged war with the worshipful grandsire and with the adorable preceptor?

**गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।**
**हत्वाऽर्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव भुञ्जीय भोगान्रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५**

गुरून् अ-हत्वा हि महा-अनुभावान् श्रेयः भोक्तुम् भैक्ष्यम् अपि इह लोके ।
हत्वा अर्थ-कामान् तु गुरून् इह एव भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिर-प्र-दिग्धान् ॥

*gurūn ahatvā hi mahānubhāvān*
*śreyo bhoktuṁ bhaikṣyam apī 'ha loke* ।
*hatvā 'rthakāmāṁs tu gurūn ihai 'va*
*bhuñjīya bhogān rudhirapradigdhān* ॥

गुरून् *gurūn* the Gurus (teachers) अहत्वा *ahatvā* instead of slaying हि *hi* indeed महानुभावान् *mahānubhāvān* most noble श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* better भोक्तुम् *bhoktuṁ* to eat भैक्ष्यम् *bhaikṣyam* alms अपि *api* even इह *iha* here लोके *loke* in the world हत्वा *hatvā* having slain अर्थकामान् *arthakāmān* wealth and desires तु *tu* indeed गुरून् *gurūn* Gurus इह *iha* here एव *eva* also भुञ्जीय *bhuñjīya* enjoy भोगान् *bhogān* enjoyments रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् *rudhirapradigdhān* stained with blood

When the defect in a balance is pointed out the weights taken in it get themselves automatically annulled A confused mind is very much like a defective balance It is incapable of inquiring into truth Sri Krishna classifies Arjuna's mind as confused Consequently his utterances are all meaningless Anyone devoid of discrimination is not an Aryan

There is neither this world nor the next to the confused and dejected in mind *Kirti* or fame attends on one given to a laudable life on earth, but Arjuna's way is unfortunately shameful. For him who is shamefully incompetent for this world, the question of the attainment of heaven does not arise He is no Aryan who fails to face a juncture, and he is unfit for the here and the hereafter

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३

क्लैब्यम् मा स्म गम पार्थ न एतत् त्वयि उप-पद्यते ।
क्षुद्रम् हृदय-दौर्बल्यम् त्यक्त्वा उद्-तिष्ठ परम् तप ॥

*klaibyam mā sma gamaḥ pārtha*
*nai 'tat tvayy upapadyate* ।
*ksudram hrdaya daurbalyam*
*tyaktvo 'ttistha paramtapa* ॥

क्लैब्यम् *klaibyam* impotence मा स्म गम *mā sma gamah* do not get पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha न *na* not एतत् *etat* this त्वयि *tvayi* in thee उपपद्यते *upapadyate* is fitting क्षुद्रम् *ksudram* mean हृदयदौर्बल्यम् *hrdaya daurbalyam* weakness of the heart त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned

*hatvā* having slain न *na* not जिजीविषामः *jijīviṣāmaḥ* we wish to live ते *te* those अवस्थिताः *avasthitāḥ* (are) standing प्रमुखे *pramukhe* in face धार्तराष्ट्राः *dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ* sons of Dhrtarashtra

**Whether we should conquer them, or they conquer us – I do not know which would be better. These very sons of Dhrtarashtra stand before us, after slaying whom we should not care to live. 6**

### Spiritual Anguish — 7-8

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः ।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥

कार्पण्य-दोष-उप-हत-स्व-भावः पृच्छामि त्वाम् धर्म-सं-मूढ-चेताः ।
यत् श्रेयः स्यात् निः-चितम् ब्रूहि तत् मे शिष्यः ते अहम् शाधि माम् त्वाम् प्र-पन्नम् ॥

*kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ*
*pṛcchāmi tvāṁ dharmasaṁmūḍhacetāḥ* ।
*yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me*
*śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam* ॥

कार्पण्य दोष उपहतस्वभावः *kārpaṇya doṣa upahatasvabhāvaḥ* with nature overpowered by the taint of pity पृच्छामि *pṛcchāmi* I ask त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee धर्मसंमूढचेताः *dharma saṁmūḍhacetāḥ* with a mind in confusion about duty यः *yaḥ* which श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* good स्यात् *syāt* may be निश्चितम् *niścitaṁ* decisively ब्रूहि *brūhi* say तत् *tat* that मे *me* for me शिष्यः *śiṣyaḥ* disciple ते *te* thy अहम् *ahaṁ* I शाधि *śādhi* teach माम् *māṁ* me त्वाम् *tvāṁ* to thee प्रपन्नम् *prapannam* taken refuge

**My nature is weighed down with the taint of feeble-mindedness; my understanding is confused as to duty. I entreat you, say definitely what is good for me.**

enjoyment traces itself to it, practice of yoga is possible because of it; attainment of *moksha* is enabled by it, reaching Godhood is impossible without it, all divine traits have their source in it. In strength lie the key and the clue to all the teachings of the Lord Exalted life begins with *Atmabodham*, which expresses itself as strength Strength is life; weakness is death.

He who is soft and weak-minded like the puffed rice soaked in milk, is good for nothing He cannot achieve anything great But the strong and virile one is heroic He is the accomplisher of everything in life

— Sri Ramakrishna

**Arjuna Declines to Fight against the Revered Ones — 4-6**

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं सङ्ख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ ४

कथम् भीष्मम् अहम् सङ्ख्ये द्रोणम् च मधु सूदन ।
इषुभि प्रति-योत्स्यामि पूजा-अर्हौ अरि-सूदन ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*katham bhīsmam aham samkhye*
*dronam ca madhusūdana*
*isubhih pratiyotsyāmi*
*pūjārhāv arisūdana* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said

कथम् *katham* how भीष्मम् *bhīsmam* Bhishma अहम् *aham* I सङ्ख्ये *samkhye* in battle द्रोणम् *dronam* Drona च *ca* and मधुसूदन *madhusūdana* O Madhusudana इषुभि. *isubhih* with arrows प्रतियोत्स्यामि *pratiyotsyāmi* shall fight पूजार्हौ *pūjārhau* worthy to be worshipped अरिसूदन *arisūdana* O destroyer of enemies

of spiritual enlightenment. It is a turning point in life. The Lord takes note of it, sympathizes with him and infuses courage into him which is the dire need of the hour. The grace of the Lord is unfailing in its descent on the devotees in the hour of need. What came as *Preyas* to Arjuna till this critical juncture now chooses to come as *Sreyas.*

He who seeks to make a sacred study of the Bhagavad Gita and he who desires to translate its tenets into action will do well to chant this verse every time and to evoke in himself the attitude of self-surrender seen here in Arjuna. It is a prayer complete in itself.

**न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद् यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।**
**अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ ८**

न हि प्र-पश्यामि मम अप-नुद्यात् यत् शोकम् उद्-शोषणम् इन्द्रियाणाम् ।
अव-आप्-य भूमौ अ-सपत्नम् ऋद्धम् राज्यम् सुराणाम् अपि च आधिपत्यम् ॥

*na hi prapaśyāmi mamā 'panudyād*
*yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇāṃ* ।
*avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddhaṁ*
*rājyaṁ surāṇām api cā 'dhipatyam* ॥

न हि *na hi* not प्रपश्यामि *prapaśyāmi* I see मम *mama* my अपनुद्यात् *apanudyāt* would remove यत् *yat* that शोकम् *śokam* grief उच्छोषणम् *ucchoṣaṇam* drier up इन्द्रियाणाम् *indriyāṇām* of my senses अवाप्य *avāpya* having obtained भूमौ *bhūmau* in the earth असपत्नम् *asapatnam* unrivalled ऋद्धम् *ṛddhaṁ* prosperous राज्यम् *rājyaṁ* dominion सुराणाम् *surāṇām* over the gods अपि *api* even च *ca* and आधिपत्यम् *ādhipatyam* lordship

**To eat the beggar's bread even is far better in this world than to slay these great-souled masters. But if I kill them, my enjoyment of wealth and desires in this world itself will be stained with blood. 5**

Bhishma is verily the embodiment of continence Chastity gets itself defined in this exemplary person The boon that he has obtained is that death would not overtake him against his consent Self-denial is his life-long austerity The Preceptor Drona is a versatile genius, a man of right conduct Arjuna owes his skill in archery to this teacher Kripa is another eminent person on the other side Arjuna has always been holding these men of merit in high veneration *To treat them as enemies now all on a* sudden is well-nigh impossible to the noble minded Arjuna And if he should happen to kill them, this earthly life itself would become hell to him

**न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।**
**यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामस्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ ६**

न च एतत् विद्म कतरत् न गरीय यद् वा जयेम यदि वा न जयेयु ।
यान् एव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम ते अव-स्थिता प्र-मुखे धार्तराष्ट्रा ॥

*na cai 'tad vidmaḥ kataran no garīyo*
*yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ* ।
*yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas*
*te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāstrāḥ* ॥

न *na* not च *ca* and एतत् *etat* this विद्म *vidmaḥ* (we) know कतरत् *katarat* which न *naḥ* for us गरीय *garīyaḥ* better यत् *yat* that वा *vā* or जयेम *jayema* we should conquer यदि *yadi* if वा *vā* or न *naḥ* us जयेयु *jayeyuḥ* they should conquer यान् *yān* whom एव *eva* even हत्वा

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*evam uktvā hṛṣīkeśaṁ guḍākeśaḥ paraṁtapaḥ ।*
*na yotsya iti govindam uktvā tūṣṇīṁ babhūva ha ॥*

संजय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said: एवम् *evaṁ* thus उक्त्वा *uktvā* having spoken हृषीकेशम् *hṛṣīkeśaṁ* to Hrishikesa गुडाकेश: *guḍākeśaḥ* (the conqueror of sleep) परन्तप: *paraṁtapaḥ* destroyer of foes न योत्स्ये *na yotsye* I will not fight इति *iti* thus गोविन्दम् *govindam* to Govinda उक्त्वा *uktvā* having said तूष्णीम् *tūṣṇīṁ* silent बभूव ह *babhūva ha* became

Sanjaya said:

**After addressing the Lord of the senses thus, Gudakesa, the terror to the foes, submitted to Govinda, 'I shall not fight,' and held silence. 9**

The descriptive names which the sagacious Sanjaya chooses to use here are all pregnant with meaning. Arjuna is fittingly called Gudakesa—the conqueror of sleep. All beings fall victim to sleep when it overtakes them. Such is the power of this factor in life. But this 'bull among men' has disciplined himself in such a way that sleep would come to him only when he made a decision to sleep. When, where and how long to sleep were all at his will. In addition to the self-mastery of this type, he is always a terror to the foes; he is the subduer of baseness within and without. A man of this calibre is not likely to beat a retreat.

The charioteer to this distinguished hero is none other than Hrishikesa—the Lord of the senses and the mind. He is moreover Govinda—the knower

**I am your disciple. Do instruct me who have taken refuge in you. 7**

Arjuna confesses that this crisis has driven him on to the position of a *Kripana*. It means that he is inclined to grieve; he has become feeble and an object of pity; it also indicates niggardliness. The Upanishad says that he who does not strive for spiritual enlightenment is a *Kripaṇa*. The man's confession is correct.

Referring to man's strivings the Upanishad declares:

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः ।
तयोः श्रेय आददानस्य साधुर्भवति हीयतेऽर्थाद्य उ प्रेयो वृणीते ॥

"One thing is the good and quite another, the pleasant; being of different requisitions, they both bind man. Holy becomes he who pursues the good, but falls the man from the goal, who chooses the pleasant."

Arjuna finds himself now at the cross-roads between the pleasant and the good. It is *Preyas*—the pleasant, that he has been blessed with in plenty all along. Learning and culture, wealth, wives, progeny, kingdom - gifts of this kind add to enjoyment. They come under the category of *Preyas*. Arjuna comes to know now of the fact that they are of no avail to allay the agony caused by a catastrophe. He who was all along the kinsman and comrade of Sri Krishna, now becomes a disciple and supplicates for the gift of *Sreyas* - the good. He surrenders himself to the Lord. This frame of mind is the prerequisite to the attainment

ment of Beatitude. There is nothing greater than *Sreyas* for man to seek. Existence finds fulfilment in It. Arjuna is going to be initiated into It. Hence this divine smile on the lips of the Lord.

Consistency is Yoga — **11**

श्री भगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११

अ-शोच्यान् अनु-अशोचः त्वम् प्रज्ञा-वादान् च भाषसे ।
गत-असून् अ-गत-असून् च न अनु-शोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*aśocyān anvaśocas tvaṁ prajñāvādāṁś ca bhāṣase*
*gatāsūn agatāsūṁś ca nā 'nuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

अशोच्यान् *aśocyān* those who should not be grieved for अन्वशोचः *anvaśocaḥ* hast grieved त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou प्रज्ञावादान् *prajñāvādān* words of wisdom च *ca* and भाषसे *bhāṣase* speakest गतासून् *gatāsūn* the dead अगतासून् *agatāsūn* the living च *ca* and न अनुशोचन्ति *na anuśocanti* grieve not पण्डिताः *paṇḍitāḥ* the wise.

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**You grieve for those who should not be grieved for; yet you spell words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead. 11**

Arjuna's utterances contained in the verses thirty-five to forty-four of the first chapter are commented upon here. The Lord puts it to him that while his arguments appear as words of wisdom, actually they are not.

**I do not find any remedy to the grief that parches my senses, though I were to gain unrivalled and prosperous monarchy on earth or even sovereignty over the celestials. 8**

At the outset Arjuna put forth the argument that the living and the departed would be adversely affected if the impending war were waged But it was only a cloak to hide the depression within himself When the Lord sympathetically diagnosed his mind, the bare truth came out

A young woman in agony hesitates to divulge it to her husband, but hastens to unburden it to her mother In this act she gets a relief which is enhanced by the sympathy of the parent It is but natural for one to open one's distressed mind to another who is full of compassion Arjuna is here found in the position of the young woman in agony The relationship between Sri Krishna and Arjuna is unique The mother's love, the father's care, the master's discipline, the king's protection and God's grace – a sweet combination of all these is found in the attitude of Sri Krishna towards Arjuna Therefore, the latter freely opens his heart and pours out his pitiable case to the benign protector

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तपः ।
न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दं उक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥ ९

एवम् उक्त्वा हृषीक-ईशम् गुडाका-ईश परम् तप ।
न योत्स्ये इति गो विन्दम उक्त्वा तूष्णीम् बभूव ह ॥

thereby gets split, integrity shattered and character lost. Such a man falls from yoga. Arjuna is warned against this fall.

Speak out that only which is in your mind. Do not create conflict between word and deed. Nothing good comes from the disharmony of the thought, word and deed in oneself.

—Sri Ramakrishna

**Atman is Immortal — 12**

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ १२

न तु एव अहम् जातु न आसम् न त्वम् न इमे जन-अधिपाः ।
न च एव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयम् अतः परम् ॥

*na tv evā 'haṁ jātu nā 'saṁ na tvaṁ ne 'me janādhipāḥ* ।
*na cai 'va na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayam ataḥ param* ॥

न *na* not तु *tu* indeed एव *eva* also अहम् *ahaṁ* I जातु *jātu* at any time न *na* not आसम् *āsaṁ* was न *na* not त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou न *na* not इमे *ime* these जनाधिपाः *janādhipāḥ* rulers of men न *na* not च *ca* and एव *eva* also न *na* not भविष्यामः *bhaviṣyāmaḥ* shall be सर्वे *sarve* all वयम् *vayaṁ* we अतः *ataḥ* from this time परम् *paraṁ* after

**Nor I, nor you, nor any of these ruling princes was ever non-existent before; nor is it that we shall cease to be in the future. 12**

Bodies appear and disappear, but not so the Atman which ever Is. A question may be raised as to how the Atman persists while the body perishes. The answer comes :-

of the destiny of beings The knowing one never goes wrong in handling things and events

Against this background, chances are very remote, of the war being called off, as is fondly hoped by Dhrtarashtra Sanjaya throws a hint to this effect

**The Harbinger of Grace — 10**

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ १०

तम् उवाच हृषीक-इश प्र-हसन् इव भारत ।
सेनयो उभयोः मध्ये वि-सीदन्तम् इदम् वच' ॥

*tam uvāca hrsikeśah prahasann iva bhārata* ।
*senayor ubhayor madhye visidantam idam vacah* ॥

तम् *tam* to him उवाच *uvāca* spoke हृषीकेश' *hrsikeśah* Hrishikesa प्रहसन् *prahasan* smiling इव *iva* as it were भारत *bhārata* O Bharata सेनयो *senayoh* of the armies उभयो *ubhayoh* (of) both मध्ये *madhye* in the middle विषीदन्तम् *visidantam* despondent इदम् *idam* this वच *vacah* word

**O Bharata, then smiling, as it were, Hrishikesa spoke these words to the desponding one placed between the two armies. 10**

Significant is the smile beaming on the lips of Hrishikesa As the dawn is the harbinger of day-break, the Lord's smile forecasts the yoga and the spiritual enlightenment that are to come on Arjuna It was *Preyas* that he had been receiving till now What he is going to receive forthwith is *Sreyas*, the sovereign remedy for all the evils of the mundane existence It is the inviolable means for the attain-

Though Atman is imperishable, does he not subject himself to heat and cold, pleasure and pain and such like experiences? The explanation comes :—

**Feelings Pertain to Body — 14 - 15**

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्याः तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४

मात्रा-स्पर्शाः तु कौन्तेय शीत-उष्ण-सुख-दुःख-दाः ।
आगम-अपायिनः अ-नित्याः तान् तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥

*mātrāsparśās tu kaunteya śītoṣṇa sukha duḥkhadāḥ* ।
*āgamāpāyino 'nityāḥ tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata* ॥

मात्रास्पर्शाः *mātrāsparśāḥ* contacts of senses with objects तु *tu* indeed कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya शीतोष्ण सुख दुःखदाः *śītoṣṇa sukha duḥkhadāḥ* producers of cold and heat, pleasure and pain आगमापायिनः *āgamāpāyinaḥ* with beginning and end अनित्याः *anityāḥ* impermanent तान् *tān* them तितिक्षस्व *titiksasva* bear (thou) भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**The contacts of the senses with their objects create, O son of Kunti, feelings of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure. They come and go and are impermanent. Bear them patiently, O Bharata. 14**

The sense organs such as the eye and the ear contact their objects which are form, sound etc. The sensations caused this way are both favourable and unfavourable. The former feelings lead to pleasure and the latter to pain. These feelings come along with sense contacts and disappear when the senses do not function. A sense object that gives pleasure at one time gives pain at another time. Heat

The way of the world is to classify a man of learning as Pandita; but the Lord does not do so. He holds that the one who truly knows the plan and purpose of the universe is a Pandita. Such a one grieves not over the death of his kin any more than one grieves over the sunset. Grief is meaningless to the knowing one. Keeping the mind constant in all eventualities is the way of the wise. While speaking like an enlightened one, Arjuna sorrows like an ignorant one. This inconsistency in him is pointed out by the Lord.

Bhishma and Drona are sages who have probed into the mystery of life and death. They are not ruffled over the end that is to come to them forthwith. Forced by circumstances they have taken sides with the wicked in a true sportsman's spirit. Bhishma in particular plays his part best, remaining unaffected by the consequences. But Arjuna grieves for these very persons who should not be grieved for.

He is a Yogeeswara who practises yoga and becomes an adept in it. But Sri Krishna is more than that; he is Yogeswara. It is yoga in all of its forms that ever emanates from Him. As light and heat constantly come from the sun, yoga comes from this Great Entity. He is therefore Yogeswara.

The Lord of Yoga points out to Arjuna that he is devoid of the very first step in yoga. He who harmonizes his thought, word and deed verily gets into yoga; but that is the very thing that Arjuna does not do. He thinks one way, speaks in another way and acts in yet another way. The personality

himself with the body is bound to be grieved. But his mind does not waver who gets fixed in the Self; he is all calmness. Remaining unruffled by the evanescent events, reveals the clarity of his understanding. He therefore becomes the man of steady wisdom. He is thus fit for immortality.

We have come into this world to avail ourselves of all the happenings here and thereby discipline ourselves for enlightenment. Cessation of misery corresponds to the removal of ignorance.

An inquiry into the nature of the Real and the Unreal ensues now:—

**The Real and the Unreal — 16-20**

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६

न अ-सतः विद्यते भावः न अ-भावः विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोः अपि दृष्टः अन्तः तु अनयोः तत्त्व-दर्शिभिः ॥

*nā 'sato vidyate bhāvo nā 'bhāvo vidyate sataḥ* ।
*ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntas tv anayos tattvadarśibhiḥ* ॥

न *na* not असतः *asataḥ* of the unreal विद्यते *vidyate* is भावः *bhāvaḥ* being न *na* not अभावः *abhāvaḥ* non-being विद्यते *vidyate* is सतः *sataḥ* of the real उभयोः *ubhayoḥ* of the two अपि *api* also दृष्टः *dṛṣṭaḥ* (has been) seen अन्तः *antaḥ* the final truth तु *tu* indeed अनयोः *anayoḥ* of these तत्त्वदर्शिभिः *tattvadarśibhiḥ* by the knowers of the truth

**The unreal has no existence; the real never ceases to be. The truth about both has been realized by the seers.** **16**

Nature of Death — 13

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ १३

देहिन अस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारम् यौवनम् जरा ।
तथा देह-अन्तर-प्राप्ति धीर तत्र न मुह्यति ॥

*dehino'smin yathā dehe kaumāram yauvanam jarā* |
*tathā dehāntaraprāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati* ||

देहिन *dehinah* of the embodied (soul) अस्मिन् *asmin* in this यथा *yathā* as देहे *dehe* in body कौमारम् *kaumāram* childhood यौवनम् *yauvanam* youth जरा *jarā* old age तथा *tathā* so also देहान्तरप्राप्ति *dehāntara prāptih* the attaining of another body धीर *dhīrah* the firm तत्र *tatra* thereat न *na* not मुह्यति *muhyati* grieves

**As the indweller in the body experiences childhood, youth and old age in the body, he also passes on to another body. The serene one is not affected thereby.**

The born one passes through babyhood, youth and old age It is the same entity that experiences all these changes It should not be held that the individual that is the baby is quite different from the individual that is the youth Likewise, the individual that transmigrates from one body into another retains his individuality The enlightened one sees into this truth and remains unperturbed over death. Conversely, he who disciplines himself to remain unperturbed under all situations prepares himself thereby for enlightenment Changes pertain to body and changelessness to Atman The knower of this fact is truly enlightened

remains untouched by time, space and causation. States of mind such as wakefulness, dream and sound sleep do not affect Atman. Modifications which are characteristics of things phenomenal do not take place in Atman. It is ever Itself. *Prajñānam Brahman* —Awareness is Reality. This is the finale of the definition of the Absolute Reality. It is sought to be explained further as follows:—

The ocean of Infinite - Existence - Knowledge - Bliss is ever Itself, unaffected by the phenomenal.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १७

अ-वि-नाशि तु तत् विद्धि येन सर्वम् इदम् ततम् ।
वि-नाशम् अ-वि-अयस्य अस्य न कः-चित् कर्तुम् अर्हति ॥

*avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idaṁ tatam* ।
*vināśam avyayasyā 'sya na kaścit kartum arhati* ॥

अविनाशि *avināśi* indestructible तु *tu* indeed तत् *tat* that विद्धि *viddhi* know (thou) येन *yena* by whom सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इदम् *idaṁ* this ततम् *tataṁ* is pervaded विनाशम् *vināśaṁ* destruction अव्ययस्य अस्य *avyayasya asya* of the imperishable न *na* not कश्चित् *kaścit* anyone कर्तुम् *kartuṁ* to do अर्हति *arhati* is able

**Know that to be verily indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can effect the destruction of the Immutable.** **17**

Space is all pervasive and infinite. Clouds appear all on a sudden in it; but their presence does not cause division in space. It is possible for clouds

and cold may be cited as examples The food that is delicious and inviting while one is in health turns loathsome when in sickness Pleasure and pain are therefore transitory He who remains unaffected by them becomes firm in life Practice of *Titiksha* or forbearance is a sure means to healthy-mindedness The practiser thereof is not affected by pleasure and pain, he becomes competent for enlightenment

But then, how does such a one become fit for enlightenment? The answer comes —

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदु.खसुख धीर सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५

यम् हि न व्यथयन्ति एते पुरुषम् पुरुष-ऋषभ ।
सम-दु ख सुखम् धीरम् स अ-मृत-त्वाय कल्पते ॥

*yam hi na vyathayanty ete purusam purusarsabha* ।
*sama duhkha sukham dhiram so 'mrta tvāya kalpate* ॥

यम् *yam* whom हि *hi* surely न व्यथयन्ति *na vyathayanti* afflict not एते *ete* these पुरुषम् *purusam* man पुरुष ऋषभ *purusa rsabha* chief among men समदु खसुखम् *sama duhkha sukham* same in pleasure and pain धीरम् *dhīram* firm स *sah* he अमृतत्वाय *amrtatvāya* for immortality कल्पते *kalpate* is fit

**That man, O the best of men, is fitted for immortality, whom these do not torment, who is balanced in pain and pleasure and steadfast. 15**

The indweller in the Puri—in the body looked upon as a city—is called Purusha Pleasure and pain occur inevitably in the body because of the contact of the senses with their objects He who identifies

Atman does not undergo any change whatsoever, It being eternal. All the water in a pond evaporates and disappears. Even so, the body of an individual disintegrates and disappears. But Atman is not exposed to this kind of destruction; it is therefore indestructible. Body can be cognized and described; but Atman is beyond the domain of the mind and speech; so it is immeasurable.

Because of delusion over earthly relationship and over things earthly, Arjuna chooses to recoil from the righteous war. It ill-behoves him to abandon his duty. So the Lord exhorts him, 'Fight therefore, O Bharata.' This exhortation can be found again and again, as the burden of the Gita.

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १९

यः एनम् वेत्ति हन्तारम् यः च एनम् मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न वि-जानीतः न अयम् हन्ति न हन्यते ॥

*ya enaṁ vetti hantāraṁ yaś cai 'naṁ manyate hatam |*
*ubhau tau na vijānīto nā 'yaṁ hanti na hanyate ||*

यः *yaḥ* he who एनम् *enaṁ* this (self) वेत्ति *vetti* knows हन्तारम् *hantāraṁ* slayer यः *yaḥ* he who च *ca* and एनम् *enaṁ* this मन्यते *manyate* thinks हतम् *hatam* slain उभौ *ubhau* both तौ *tau* those न *na* not विजानीतः *vijānītaḥ* know न *na* not अयम् *ayaṁ* this हन्ति *hanti* slays न *na* not हन्यते *hanyate* is slain

**He who holds Atman as slayer and he who considers It as the slain, both of them are ignorant. It slays not, nor is It slain.** **19**

*Tattva-darśana* is seeing into the reality of things Beings are seeking to have a correct understanding of things about them To the extent their understanding of things is perfect their adjustment too becomes perfect Life is a series of experiments to get at the permanent in preference to the impermanent A man is attracted by a panoramic plot of land on a river bank and he decides to put up a beautiful house there But on investigation he finds out that the land is liable to inundation during the rains Though the plot happens to be ideally situated it has to be rejected for valid reasons Many things in nature are unreal and unreliable while seeming to be real and reliable

The seers of truth behold the body and the pleasure and pain associated with it as unreal Our bodies were not existent in the distant past, they will not be in the distant future Though they are now, their existence is equivalent to non-existence—*abhāvam* The pleasure of wealth enjoyed in dream is unreal even while enjoying it

The body is devoid of *bhāva* and therefore unreal It was not in the past, it has come into being now, it will not be in the future What seems to be real now is only a modification of the elements It is therefore to be discounted as non existent The man of understanding should not be affected by pleasure and pain which are all born of identification with the body

Atman is Existence, it is Real, it is *bhāva* which means awareness or pure consciousness Awareness

To be born, to exist, to grow, to change, to decay, to perish—these are the six kinds of modifications undergone by the body constituted of elements. But the Atman remains unaffected by these changes.

**Be not Attached to Karma — 21**

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यम् य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१

वेद अ-वि-नाशिनम् नित्यम् यः एनम् अ-जम् अ-वि-अयम् ।
कथम् सः पुरुषः पार्थ कम् घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥

*vedā 'vināśinaṁ nityaṁ ya enam ajam avyayam* ।
*kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam* ॥

वेद *veda* knows अविनाशिनम् *avināśinaṁ* indestructible नित्यम् *nityaṁ* eternal यः *yaḥ* who एनम् *enaṁ* this (self) अजम् *ajam* unborn अव्ययम् *avyayam* inexhaustible कथम् *kathaṁ* how सः *saḥ* he (that) पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* man पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha कम् *kaṁ* whom घातयति *ghātayati* causes to be slain हन्ति *hanti* kills कम् *kaṁ* whom

**He who cognizes the Atman as indestructible, eternal, unborn and changeless, how can he slay, O Partha, or cause another to slay? 21**

Atman is actionless. The knower of Atman is free from egoism; therefore the feeling of agency is not in him. Karma does not, for that reason, taint him. Slaying and causing to slay are apparently terrible actions. But because of the absence of egoism in an enlightened person, even such evil actions do not tarnish him. An aspirant tries to be free from egoism while discharging his duty.

to change in magnitude But Akasa or space remains ever itself Akin to Akasa, Awareness is the substratum of the manifested universe, which appears and disappears No addition or subtraction can be effected in Awareness. It is the eternal Witness.

While instructing the disciples the Guru first pointed out two fingers indicating thereby that there are in the relative existence two realities — Brahman and Maya Then he folded in one finger to suggest that Brahman is ever constant while Maya appears and disappears — Sri Ramakrishna

The phenomenal is explained:—

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥ १८

अन्त-वन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्य उक्ता शरीरिण. ।
अ-नाशिन अ-प्र-मेयस्य तस्मात् युध्यस्व भारत ॥

*antavanta ime dehā nityasyo 'ktāh śarīrinah |*
*anāśino 'prameyasya tasmād yudhyasva bhārata ||*

अन्तवन्त *antavantaḥ* having an end इमे *ime* these देहा *dehāh* bodies नित्यस्य *nityasya* of the everlasting उक्ता *uktāh* are said शरीरिण *śarīrinah* of the embodied अनाशिन *anāśinaḥ* of the indestructible अप्रमेयस्य *aprameyasya* of the immeasurable तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore युध्यस्व *yudhyasva* fight भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**These bodies of the Indweller, who is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable, are said to have an end. Fight therefore, O Bharata.** **18**

The ocean is ever itself A portion of the water in it changes place forming waves on the surface and currents below. Elsewhere it freezes as icebergs. Changes of this kind take place in nature, but

develops new skin from within and then casts off the slough. Even so the Jivatman mentally assumes a new form before dissociating himself from the old body. In other words his mental make up does not die along with the gross body. It is called the subtle body and it persists with its innate tendencies and dispositions. This is the core of the Jivatman and he survives the death of the physical frame. He then chooses to develop another gross body in a womb suited to his attainments.

The snake and its slough are not one and the same. Even so the Atman and the body are different, one from the other.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**Atman Is Super-mundane — 23-25**

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ २३

न एनम् छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि न एनम् दहति पावकः ।
न च एनम् क्लेदयन्ति आपः न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

*nai 'naṁ chindanti śastrāṇi nai 'naṁ dahati pāvakaḥ* ।
*na cai 'naṁ kledayanty āpo na śoṣayati mārutaḥ* ॥

न *na* not एनम् *enaṁ* this (self) छिन्दन्ति *chindanti* cut शस्त्राणि *śastrāṇi* weapons न *na* not एनम् *enaṁ* this दहति *dahati* burns पावकः *pāvakaḥ* fire न *na* not च *ca* and एनम् *enaṁ* this क्लेदयन्ति *kledayanti* wet आपः *āpaḥ* waters न *na* not शोषयति *śoṣayati* dries मारुतः *mārutaḥ* wind

**Weapons do not cleave the Atman, fire burns It not, water wets It not, wind dries It not. 23**

Among the five elements Akasa is one that is actionless. So no reference to it is made here. The

'I am ruined', laments the man who suddenly loses his very much loved fortune Though he is different from his wealth, identification with it drives him on to this deluded position Attachment to the body makes one feel that physical death is death to the Atman But the immortal Self remains unaffected by all bodily changes As the sky is ever itself in the midst of clouds coming and going, the Atman is changeless while the bodies change.

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ २०

न जायते म्रियते वा कदा चित् न अयम् भूत्वा भविता वा न भूय ।
अ-ज, नित्य शाश्वत अयम् पुराण न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीर ॥

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin*
*nā 'yam bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhuyah* ।
*ajo nityah śāśvato 'yam purāno*
*na hanyate hanyamāne śarire* ॥

न *na* not जायते *jāyate* is born म्रियते *mriyate* dies वा *vā* or कदाचित् *kadācit* at any time न *na* not अयम् *ayam* this (self) भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having been भविता *bhavitā* will be वा *vā* or न *na* not भूय *bhūyah* (any) more अज *ajah* unborn नित्य *nityah* eternal शाश्वत *śāśvatah* changeless अयम् *ayam* this पुराण *purānah* ancient न *na* not हन्यते *hanyate* is killed हन्यमाने *hanyamāne* being killed शरीरे *śarire* in body

**The Atman is neither born nor does It die. Coming into being and ceasing to be do not take place in It. Unborn, eternal, constant and ancient, It is not killed when the body is slain. 20**

cannot be called eternal, because of its absence in one place. Being eternal It is all-pervading. Like Akasa, Atman is everywhere; so It is stable. That which changes places is mobile; but Atman being present everywhere, It is immovable. Time gains no access to Atman; It is for this reason held as everlasting.

The indescribable Atman is sought to be described in innumerable ways. Through varieties of definitions and explanations some vague concept of Him is formed in the mind. But to the extent the mind gets purified cognition of Him becomes lucid. And the cessation of misery is ever in direct proportion to one's being anchored in the Self. Misery is an unwanted state of mind got into through ignorance. *Sreyas* is not where misery is. The Lord throws light on the glory of Atman in order to cure Arjuna of the despondency meaninglessly assumed by him.

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयं अविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २५

अ-व्यक्तः अयम् अ-चिन्त्यः अयम् अ-वि-कार्यः अयम् उच्यते ।
तस्मात् एवम् विदित्वा एनम् न अनु-शोचितुम् अर्हसि ॥

*avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam avikāryo 'yam ucyate |*
*tasmād evaṁ viditvai 'naṁ nā 'nuśocitum arhasi ||*

अव्यक्तः *avyaktaḥ* unmanifested अयम् *ayaṁ* this (self) अचिन्त्यः *acintyaḥ* unthinkable अयम् *ayaṁ* this अविकार्यः *avikāryaḥ* unchangeable अयम् *ayaṁ* this उच्यते *ucyate* is said तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore एवम् *evaṁ* thus विदित्वा *viditvā* having known एनम् *enaṁ* this

Absorbed as a saint was, he was passing along a crowded street Then by chance he trampled upon the foot of a wicked man That ruffian became enraged and recklessly assaulted the holy man, until he fainted and fell down He was forthwith carried to the Ashrama and tenderly nursed by his disciples. When he regained consciousness he was asked if he could recognize the one attending on him. "The hand that beat up this body is now nursing it", came the reply. The knower of Brahman distinguishes not the assaulter from the assaulted.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**Rebirth of the Embodied — 22**

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥ २२

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरः अपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि वि-हाय जीर्णानि अन्यानि सम्-याति नवानि देही ॥

*vāsāmsi jirnāni yathā vihāya*
*navāni grhnāti naro 'parāni* |
*tathā śarīrāni vihāya jirnāny*
*anyāni samyāti navāni dehī* ||

वासांसि *vāsāmsi* clothes जीर्णानि *jirnāni* worn out यथा *yathā* as विहाय *vihāya* having cast away नवानि *navāni* new गृह्णाति *grhnāti* takes नरः *narah* man अपराणि *aparāni* others तथा *tathā* so शरीराणि *śarīrāni* bodies विहाय *vihāya* having cast away जीर्णानि *jirnāni* worn out अन्यानि *anyāni* others संयाति *samyāti* enters नवानि *navāni* new देही *dehī* the embodied (one)

**As a man casting off worn-out garments puts on new ones, so the embodied, casting off worn-out bodies enters into others that are new. 22**

It is only after the procurement of new clothings that man rejects the old worn-out ones. The snake

अथ च एनम् नित्य-जातम् नित्यम् वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथा अपि त्वम् महा-बाहो न एनम् शोचितुम् अर्हसि ॥

*atha cai 'naṁ nityajātaṁ nityaṁ vā manyase mṛtam |*
*tathā 'pi tvaṁ mahābāho nai 'naṁ śocitum arhasi ||*

अथ *atha* now च *ca* and एनम् *enaṁ* this (self) नित्यजातम् *nityajātaṁ* constantly born नित्यम् *nityaṁ* constantly वा *vā* or मन्यसे *manyase* thinkest मृतम् *mṛtaṁ* dead तथा अपि *tathā api* even then त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou महाबाहो *mahābāho* mighty armed न *na* not एनम् *enaṁ* this शोचितुम् *śocituṁ* to grieve अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) oughtest

**Or, if you conceive of Atman as given to constant births and deaths, even then, O mighty armed, you should not sorrow. 26**

That there is nothing permanent, is the view of the materialists. The Lord now takes this standpoint for inquiry. Granting that this view is true, even then there is no ground for grieving. A man being given to theism, atheism, agnosticism, materialism or any other belief is not of much consequence. Irrespective of his creed, he must be free from sorrowing. It is despondency that takes away all manliness from man.

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युः ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २७

जातस्य हि ध्रुवः मृत्युः ध्रुवम् जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मात् अ-परि-हार्ये अर्थे न त्वम् शोचितुम् अर्हसि ॥

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyuḥ dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca |*
*tasmād aparihārye 'rthe na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi ||*

जातस्य *jātasya* of the born हि *hi* for ध्रुवः *dhruvaḥ* certain मृत्युः *mṛtyuḥ* death ध्रुवम् *dhruvaṁ* certain जन्म

actions of the other four elements do not affect the Atman. Weapons are made of the stuff which the earth is. Atman being indivisible, weapons cannot hurt it. All the four active elements are incapable of acting on Akasa which is inert. How then can they act on Atman which is Chit-akasa which transcends the inert Akasa itself?

The Atman remains unaffected by mundane things Pleasure and pain, virtue and vice—dual states such as these do not have sway on It But they affect the person identified with the body Smoke tarnishes the walls, but not the space within them

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयं अक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुः अचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ २४

अ-छेद्य अयम् अ-दाह्यः अयम् अ-क्लेद्यः अ-शोष्य एव च ।
नित्य. सर्व-गत स्थाणुः अ-चल अयम् सनातन ॥

*acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca ।*
*nityah sarvagatah sthānuh acalo 'yam sanātanah ॥*

अच्छेद्यः *acchedyaḥ* cannot be cut अयम् *ayam* this self अदाह्य. *adāhyah* cannot be burnt अयम् *ayam* this अक्लेद्यः *akledyah* cannot be wetted अशोष्यः *aśosyah* cannot be dried एव *eva* also च *ca* and नित्यः *nityah* eternal सर्वगतः *sarvagatah* all-pervading स्थाणु. *sthānuh* stable अचल. *acalah* immovable अयम् *ayam* this सनातनः *sanātanah* ancient

**This Self is uncleavable, incombustible and neither wetted nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable and everlasting. 24**

Atman cannot be cleaved; therefore It is eternal. That which exists in one place and not in another

अ-वि-अक्त-आदीनि भूतानि वि-अक्त-मध्यानि भारत ।
अ-वि-अक्त-निधनानि एव तत्र का परि-देवना ॥

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni vyakta madhyāni bhārata* ।
*avyaktanidhanāny eva tatra kā paridevanā* ॥

अव्यक्तादीनि *avyaktādīni* unmanifested in the beginning भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings व्यक्तमध्यानि *vyakta madhyāni* manifested in their middle state भारत *bhārata* O Bharata अव्यक्तनिधनानि *avyakta nidhanāni* unmanifested again in the end एव *eva* also तत्र *tatra* there का *kā* what परिदेवना *paridevanā* grief

**Beings are all, O Bharata, unmanifested in their origin, manifested in their mid-state and unmanifested again in their end. What is the point then for anguish?**

Beings claimed as kith and kin are those that have come into being now. Persons contacted in dream had not been in existence before; they would not be after the dream breaks. Though existing in the mid-state, actually they are not. According to materialism, the so-called relatives have assumed forms in conformity with the law of nature; they will again cease to be; lamenting therefore over the temporarily appearing individuals serves no purpose.

The heterodox points of view are wound up here. The Lord now returns to the orthodox ways of enquiry:—

### Atman Transcends Mind and Speech — 29-30

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनं आश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९

आश्चर्य-वत् पश्यति कः-चित् एनम् आश्चर्य-वत् वदति तथा एव च अन्यः ।
आश्चर्य-वत् च एनम् अन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वा अपि एनम् वेद न च एव कः-चित् ॥

न *na* not अनुशोचितुम् *anusocitum* to grieve अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) oughtest

**This Atman is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable and immutable. Therefore, knowing it as such, you should not grieve. 25**

Atman cannot be perceived by any of the senses, and whatever does not come within the ken of the senses is necessarily unmanifested It is very hard to conceive of a thing that cannot be perceived Atman is therefore said to be unthinkable The four elements — air, fire, water and earth — can be sensed They are seen to be undergoing modifications, as such they are mutable But the element Akasa undergoes no modification It is ever in its original state Like Akasa, Atman is ever in Its original state It is therefore said to be immutable Elemental Akasa is insentient and Atman or Chitakasa is sentient, in every other respect they are identical Both being partless they remain immutable It ill-becomes one to grieve over the immutable

What is Brahman like? It cannot be defined with words One may be called upon to explain what the ocean is like, to a person who has never seen it The expounder can at best say, It is a vast sheet of water' Defining Brahman is much more difficult

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Materialistic Standpoint — 26 28

अथ चेनं नित्यजातं नित्य वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैन शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २६

Atman remains but partially comprehended or not comprehended at all. Mind is the screen that hides Its view.

The Vedas, the *Agamas*, the *Puranas* and all other scriptures in the world may be compared with the spittle-defiled food, *Ucchistam*, because of their being tongue-touched. But the Infinite Brahman has never become spittle-defiled. Nobody has yet ever succeeded in defining It in words.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The fact about the Atman is :—

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ ३०

देही नित्यम् अ-वध्यः अयम् देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात् सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वम् शोचितुम् अर्हसि ॥

*dehī nityam avadhyo 'yaṁ dehe sarvasya bhārata* ।
*tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi* ॥

देही *dehī* indweller नित्यम् *nityaṁ* always अवध्यः *avadhyaḥ* indestructible अयम् *ayaṁ* this देहे *dehe* in the body सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all भारत *bhārata* O Bharata तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* (for) all भूतानि *bhūtāni* creatures न *na* not त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou शोचितुम् *śocituṁ* to grieve अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) shouldest

**This, the Indweller in the bodies of all is ever invulnerable, O Bharata. Therefore you should not grieve for any being. 30**

The views of the materialists are herein set aside as baseless. Further, the fact about Atman is conclusively presented. It is incumbent on man to be poised above despondency and thereby pave the way for spiritual enlightenment. And this is verily the path of *Sreyas*

*janma* birth मृतस्य *mṛtasya* of the dead च *ca* and तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore अपरिहार्ये *aparihārye* inevitable अर्थे *arthe* in matter न *na* not त्वम् *tvam* thou शोचितुम् *socitum* to grieve अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) oughtest

**Death is certain of that which is born; birth is certain of that which is dead. You should not therefore lament over the inevitable. 27**

When a body fails to function properly it disintegrates and undergoes the modification called death But other bodies crop up from the same modified matter. They contain inherent propelling force called desire, which drives them on to activities of life. Birth and death are thus a matter of course

A school of nihilism believes in an individual retaining his individuality as long as the motive power of karma lasts. His individuality continues through births and deaths The exhausting of his karma is like the end of oil in a burning lamp The flame then becomes extinct Even so a man ceases to be when his karma comes to an end

Another school of atheism holds on to the view that a man's assuming a body and then annihilating it is a matter of course in nature, even as a lump of clay in a river continues to change its form and shape Changes of form are called births and deaths Mourning over this modification is meaningless, according to this school of thought

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ २८

beating a retreat from it, unrighteousness is allowed to thrive. He is no *Kshatriya* who suffers unrighteousness to prosper. And the man who takes to evil ways in preference to the good, estranges himself from *Sreyas;* he falls further. Holding on to one's *Swadharma* is a sure means for the gaining of *Sreyas.* One's *Swadharma* is that duty which is best suited to one's attainments and temperament.

How shall a man avail himself of the tide of fortune that sets in but rarely? The reply ensues:—

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥ ३२

यदृच्छया च उप-पन्नम् स्वर्ग-द्वारम् अप-आ-वृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धम् ईदृशम् ॥

*yadṛcchayā co 'papannaṁ svargadvāram apāvṛtam* ।
*sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha labhante yuddham īdṛśam* ॥

यदृच्छया *yadṛcchayā* of itself च *ca* and उपपन्नम् *upapannaṁ* come स्वर्गद्वारम् *svargadvāraṁ* the gate of heaven अपावृतम् *apāvṛtaṁ* opened सुखिनः *sukhinaḥ* happy क्षत्रियाः *kṣatriyāḥ* Kshatriyas पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha लभन्ते *labhante* obtain युद्धम् *yuddhaṁ* battle ईदृशम् *īdṛśaṁ* such

**Happy are the Kshatriyas, O Partha, who obtain such a warfare that comes unsought as an open gateway to heaven.** 32

At one time or another the tide of fortune rises for every one. All that a man ought to do is to discharge his duty as best as he can. It is like taking the boat up the river, overcoming the downward flow of water. While steadfastly and devotedly doing his duty, a favourable time comes to bless the

*āścaryavat paśyati kaścid enam*
*āścaryavad vadati tathai 'va cā 'nyah* ।
*āścaryavac cai 'nam anyah śrnoti*
*śrutvā 'py enam veda na cai 'va kaścit* ॥

आश्चर्यवत् *āścaryavat* as a wonder पश्यति *paśyati* sees कश्चित् *kaścit* some one एनम् *enam* this (self) आश्चर्यवत् *āścaryavat* as a wonder वदति *vadati* speaks of तथा *tathā* so एव *eva* also च *ca* and अन्यः *anyah* another आश्चर्यवत् *āścaryavat* as a wonder च *ca* and एनम् *enam* this अन्य *anyah* another शृणोति *śrnoti* hears श्रुत्वा *śrutvā* having heard अपि *api* even एनम् *enam* this वेद *veda* knows न *na* not च *ca* and एव *eva* also कश्चित् *kaścit* any one

**One beholds the Self as wonderful; another mentions of It as marvellous; another again hears of It as strange; though hearing yet another knows It not at all.**

The Atman cannot be classified with the phenomenal things. Hardly ever anybody thinks of enquiring into what is beyond the phenomenal universe. Explorers into the realm of Atman are therefore rare. This field remains incomprehensible to those not yet fully evolved in mind. Light passes imperfectly through tainted and heterogeneous glass. Even so matters pertaining to Atman remain hazy to the imperfect in mind. One feels amazed fancying that he has grasped It either while meditating or while enquiring of It. It is but natural for one to be wonder-struck while reading, hearing or reflecting on the Atman. Reflecting on It is as good as mentally seeing It. Through all these apperceptions the

अथ चेत् *atha cet* but if त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou इमम् *imaṁ* this धर्म्यम् *dharmyaṁ* righteous संग्रामम् *saṁgrāmaṁ* warfare न *na* not करिष्यसि *kariṣyasi* will do ततः *tataḥ* then स्वधर्मम् *svadharmaṁ* own-duty कीर्तिम् *kīrtiṁ* fame च *ca* and हित्वा *hitvā* having abandoned पापम् *pāpaṁ* sin अवाप्स्यसि *avāpsyasi* shall incur

**But if you will not wage this righteous warfare, then forfeiting your own duty and honour, you will incur sin.** 33

Self annihilation is the wage of sin. Greater than that is the fall of the man who fails to do in time his duty that is based on righteousness. Omission of doing the right thing is more potent for evil than the commission of the bad thing.

Fame and honour attend on the person who lives the life on earth well. Conversely, ill-fame and dishonour come and choke the evil career. The how of it is as follows:—

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिः मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४

अ-कीर्तिम् च अपि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति ते अ-व्ययाम् ।
सम्-भावितस्य च अ-कीर्तिः मरणात् अति-रिच्यते ॥

*akīrtiṁ cā 'pi bhūtāni kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayām* ।
*saṁbhāvitasya cā 'kīrtiḥ maraṇād atiricyate* ॥

अकीर्तिम् *akīrtiṁ* dishonour च *ca* and अपि *api* also भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings कथयिष्यन्ति *kathayiṣyanti* tell ते *te* thy अव्ययाम् *avyayāṁ* everlasting सम्भावितस्य *saṁbhāvitasya* of the honoured च *ca* and अकीर्तिः *akīrtiḥ* dishonour मरणात् *maraṇāt* than death अतिरिच्यते *atiricyate* exceeds

A man suffers from a midnight dream that somebody comes with a sword in hand to butcher him to pieces. Being frightened beyond wit, he screams and wakes up. He finds in the dim lamp light the door bolted within and the presence of none in the room. Still his heart continues to palpitate rapidly for sometime. This is the sign of one's identification with one's body.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Not only the spiritual standpoint, but the worldly standpoint also is now taken into consideration:—

**Swerve not from Duty—31-37**

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥ ३१

स्व-धर्मम् अपि च अव-ईक्ष्य न वि-कम्पितुम् अर्हसि ।
धर्म्यात् हि युद्धात् श्रेयः अन्यत् क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥

*svadharmam api cā 'vekṣya*
*na vikampitum arhasi* ।
*dharmyādd hi yuddhāc chreyo 'nyat*
*kṣatriyasya na vidyate* ॥

स्वधर्मम् *svadharmaṁ* own duty अपि *api* also च *ca* and अवेक्ष्य *aveksya* looking at न *na* not विकम्पितुम् *vikampituṁ* to waver अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) oughtest धर्म्यात् *dharmyāt* than righteous हि *hi* indeed युद्धात् *yuddhāt* than war श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* higher अन्यत् *anyat* other क्षत्रियस्य *kṣatriyasya* of a Kshatriya न *na* not विद्यते *vidyate* is

**Again, looking at your own duty as well, you should not waver; for, there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than righteous war. 31**

A *Kshatriya* holds righteousness superior to mere living. By waging the war of the kind that has come about, righteousness is upheld; but by

The sworn enemies of Arjuna such as Duryodhana and others were compelled, unwillingly though, to admire his valour. They had to concede, with concealed envy of course, that Arjuna was one who engaged the Lord Siva Himself in an encounter and won from Him for prize, the divine weapon, Pasupata. All the same, they had the design to vanquish this man of mighty valour somehow. In a situation like this, they would not construe that Arjuna has withdrawn from the warfront out of love and consideration for his kith and kin. They would slight him as one who has fled from fear. Regard for the hero will at once transform itself into ridicule. That infamy can in no way be remedied. Fear does not become a hero. A man given to fear cannot achieve anything in this world. The deed done today from fear will be the cause for repentance tomorrow.

Ridicule of the hero will assume other forms such as:—

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६

अ-वाच्य-वादान् च बहून् वदिष्यन्ति तव अ-हिताः ।
निन्दन्तः तव सामर्थ्यम् ततः दुःख-तरम् नु किम् ॥

*avācyavādāṁś ca bahūn vadiṣyanti tavā 'hitāḥ* ।
*nindantas tava sāmarthyaṁ tato duḥkhataraṁ nu kim* ॥

अवाच्यवादान् *avācyavādān* words that are improper to be spoken च *ca* and बहून् *bahūn* many वदिष्यन्ति *vadiṣyanti* will say तव *tava* thy अहिताः *ahitāḥ* enemies निन्दन्तः *nindantaḥ* cavilling तव *tava* thy सामर्थ्यं *sāmarthyaṁ* power ततः *tataḥ* than this दुःखतरम् *duḥkhataraṁ* more painful नु *nu* indeed किम् *kiṁ* what

man with all prosperity. It is like the ebb of the tide. Then the water rushes up against the river, providing facilities to row the boat easily. The wind also begins to blow favourably then. By unfurling the sail the passage is quickened. A little effort at the appropriate time leads to great results. That is called the opportune moment. Arjuna is face to face with it now. The trials and tribulations of the exile in the forest are over. He has but to execute his duty now as a matter of course. The attainments of the earth and heaven, of victory and fame, and of enjoyment and blessedness are waiting to attend on him. Diffidence and despondency are therefore out of place at this juncture.

The tide of fortune and the opportune time come to one and all, consistent with the law of growth and evolution. Blessed are they who utilize these advantages to get fixed in *Sreyas.*

What are the adverse consequences of not utilizing these advantages that come but rarely ever in a life time? The answer comes :—

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३३

अथ चेत् त्वम् इमम् धर्म्यम् संग्रामम् न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्व-धर्मम् कीर्तिम् च हित्वा पापम् अव-आप्स्यसि ॥

*atha cet tvam imam dharmyam*
*saṁgrāmaṁ na kariṣyasi* ।
*tataḥ svadharmaṁ kīrtiṁ ca*
*hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi* ॥

*hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ jitvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm* |
*tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛta niścayaḥ* ||

हतः *hataḥ* slain वा *vā* or प्राप्स्यसि *prāpsyasi* (thou) will obtain स्वर्गम् *svargaṁ* heaven जित्वा *jitvā* having conquered वा *vā* or भोक्ष्यसे *bhokṣyase* (thou) wilt enjoy महीम् *mahīṁ* the earth तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore उत्तिष्ठ *uttiṣṭha* stand up कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya युद्धाय *yuddhāya* for fight कृत निश्चयः *kṛta niścayaḥ* resolved

**Slain you will gain heaven; victorious you will enjoy the earth. Therefore rouse up O son of Kunti, resolved to fight.** 37

As foreign matter in the body has to be eliminated through disease, the wicked in the world have to be eliminated through the righteous war. After recounting the evils that would befall the society if this war was not waged, the good that would ensue are now enumerated. A righteous warfare abounds with welfare both here and hereafter. It is the only panacea against the incorrigibles. Would a zealous defender of righteousness ever let go such a golden opportunity?

Viewed from the worldy standpoint Arjuna has no grounds for grieving and for beating a retreat. After making this position clear, the Yogeswara now seeks to introduce yoga into the otherwise earthly life, in the following manner :–

**Transform Karma into KarmaYoga — 38-41**

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३८

**People will ever recount your infamy. To the honoured, infamy is surely worse than death. 34**

The characteristic of the ordinary man is to preserve life somehow. But different is the way of the hero. He knows well to safeguard life as well as sacrifice it for a great cause. By his willingly surrendering life to an ideal, his glory increases and fame spreads. It is bad enough for a warrior to cringe before the enemy and beg to be spared when being trampled to death by him; it is much worse for a hero to cling to life after losing honour and fame.

People who indulge in slander and calumny will choose to do so on any and every flimsy ground projected by their imagination. For example :—

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥ ३५

भयात् रणात् उप-रतम् मंस्यन्ते त्वाम् महा-रथाः ।
येषाम् च त्वम् बहु-मतः भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥

*bhayād raṇād uparatam mamsyante tvām mahārathāḥ* ।
*yeṣām ca tvaṁ bahumato bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam* ॥

भयात् *bhayāt* from fear रणात् *raṇāt* from the battle उपरतम् *uparatam* withdrawn मंस्यन्ते *mamsyante* will think त्वाम् *tvām* thee महारथाः *mahārathāḥ* the great car-warriors येषाम् *yeṣām* of whom च *ca* and त्वम् *tvam* thou बहुमतः *bahumataḥ* much thought of भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having been यास्यसि *yāsyasi* will receive लाघवम् *lāghavam* lightness

**The great chariot-warriors will view you as one fled from the war out of fear; you that were highly esteemed by them will be lightly held. 35**

The one is attached and the other detached. Both attachment and detachment are solely in the mind.

A weakling totters while carrying a small load to a short distance. But a strong man coming from a long distance with a heavy load of two maunds on his head stands by and sees a wrestling match, unmindful of the burden on his head. To the strong in body and mind problems are but few.

—Sri Ramakrishna

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९

एषा ते अभि-हिता सांख्ये बुद्धिः योगे तु इमाम् शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तः यया पार्थ कर्म-बन्धम् प्र-हास्यसि ॥

*eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṁkhye*
*buddhir yoge tv imāṁ śṛṇu* ।
*buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha*
*karma bandhaṁ prahāsyasi* ॥

एषा *eṣā* this ते *te* to thee अभिहिता *abhihitā* (is) declared सांख्ये *sāṁkhye* in Samkhya बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* wisdom योगे *yoge* in the yoga तु *tu* indeed इमाम् *imāṁ* this शृणु *śṛṇu* hear बुद्ध्या *buddhyā* with wisdom युक्तः *yuktaḥ* induced यया *yayā* which पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha कर्मबन्धम् *karma bandhaṁ* bondage of karma प्रहास्यसि *prahāsyasi* (thou) shalt cast off

**The ideal of Self-knowledge has been presented to you. Hearken now to the practice thereof. Endowed with it, O Partha, you will break through the bonds of karma.** 39

The principles of Self-knowledge have been enumerated in the verses 11 to 30. Yoga or the practice thereof will now be taught in the verses 40, 41, 45—53.

**Your enemies will also slander your strength and speak many unseemly words. What could be more painful than that ?** 36

When a man is well off in life, all his doings will be extolled as exemplary, but if there be a setback in his life, those very doings of his will suddenly become exposed to uncharitable criticism and slander People who have been all along admiring Arjuna for his deeds of valour will not hesitate to belittle him and his deeds The reputation that he has so far gained is well-grounded, indeed But irrepairable will be the ignominy that is bound to come if he failed in doing his duty The very thought of Arjuna used to create a shudder in the hearts of his enemies His very martial appearance on the battle-field has damped the war-zeal of his enemies But if he happens to beat a retreat now, those trembling enemies will surely come to themselves again More than that, their fear for Arjuna will immediately turn into ridicule of him Their indulgence in insolent jokes would become unbearable There is no alternative therefore, to waging the war that has been declared

The grief stricken Arjuna contends that war is beset with plenty of evils But what does the Lord say in the matter ? Here comes His say –

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७

हत वा प्र आप्स्यसि स्वर्गम् जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मात् उद् तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृत निश्चय ॥

tice. Some simply enquire about Atman without connecting that enquiry with life. Others plunge in life without caring to know the principles that govern it. But harmonizing both is what is wanted.

Does not the yoga that is not carried on to its conclusion prove itself a sheer waste? The following is the answer to this question:—

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४०

न इह अभि-क्रम-नाशः अस्ति प्रति-अव-अयः न विद्यते ।
सु-अल्पम् अपि अस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतः भयात् ॥

*ne 'hā 'bhikramanāśo 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate* ।
*svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt* ॥

न *na* not इह *iha* in this अभिक्रमनाशः *abhikramanāśaḥ* loss of effort अस्ति *asti* is प्रत्यवायः *pratyavāyaḥ* production of contrary results न *na* not विद्यते *vidyate* is स्वल्पम् *svalpaṁ* very little अपि *api* even अस्य *asya* of this धर्मस्य *dharmasya* duty त्रायते *trāyate* protects महतः *mahataḥ* (from) great भयात् *bhayāt* fear

**In this there is no loss of attempt; nor is there any adverse effect. The practice of even a little of this dharma protects one from great fear. 40**

If the construction of a house be not completed with roofing, all that is so far done goes to waste. If the raising of a crop be not gone through with harvesting, the endeavours so far made become fruitless. But the partial practice of yoga does not suffer from any disadvantages of these kinds. Even a fragmentary application of it has its corresponding benefit

सुख-दुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभ-अ-लाभौ जय-अ-जयौ ।
ततः युद्धाय युज्यस्व न एवम् पापम् अव-आप्-स्यसि ॥

*sukha duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau* ।
*tato yuddhāya yujyasva nai 'vaṁ pāpam avāpsyasi* ॥

सुखदुःखे *sukha duḥkhe* in pleasure and pain समे *same* same कृत्वा *kṛtvā* having made लाभालाभौ *lābhālābhau* gain and loss जयाजयौ *jayājayau* victory and defeat ततः *tataḥ* then युद्धाय *yuddhāya* for battle युज्यस्व *yujyasva* engage thou न *na* not एवम् *evaṁ* thus पापम् *pāpaṁ* sin अवाप्स्यसि *avāpsyasi* shalt incur

**Treating alike pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat, engage yourself in the battle. Thus you will incur no sin. 38**

It is the way of the world to view gain and victory with pleasure and loss and defeat with pain. But different from that should be the frame of mind of those who take to self-culture. They are to disentangle the mind from likes and dislikes. All earthly events are fraught with consequences which are agreeable and disagreeable. By being favourably affected by the one and unfavourably by the other, the mind loses its stamina. By refusing to be tossed about by pain and pleasure the mind becomes steady and strong. That karma is called sin which brings in misery in its trail. But a man of strong and balanced mind takes no note of any misery that comes to him. He is in that way free from sin.

The very karma done by the man of the world is also done by the karma-yogi. But there is a world of difference between the two in their attitudes.

more deviates from it. Earthly hankerings are innumerable and people go on changing constantly from one to another. But to the seeker of the Divine the purpose is one and all endeavours are concentrated on it.

Firmness in mind comes to the one who learns concentration, which is serviceable both to the sacred and the secular. When the divergent sunbeams are focussed with the aid of a lens to one point, their powers of heat and light get intensified. Ignition of a combustible thing then becomes possible. Even so, the mind trained in concentration can both know and do a thing to perfection.

It was possible for Arjuna alone, among the disciples of Drona, to shoot his arrow successfully at a target within a grove. His success was entirely due to concentration.

When Swami Vivekananda was in America, he had an occasion to watch a few students practising shooting. Their target was three or four egg shells tethered to float and dance on a rustling brook. The failure of all of them in their attempts brought a smile on the lips of the Swami. The provoked youths challenged the ability of this strange observer. Handling a gun for the first time in life, the Swami shot and smashed the shell that he aimed at. "The secret of success lies in concentration," said he when the others wondered how he could achieve it at the very first attempt, as claimed by him.

Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, the famous scientist, demonstrated to the world that all the feelings and

*Samkhya* is one of the six systems of philosophy pertaining to Hinduism. Its origin is attributed to the sage Kapila. The literal meaning of the word *Samkhya* is enumeration. According to this system *Prakriti* is constituted of twenty-four categories and *Purusha* or Atman is the twentyfifth. *Purushas* again are infinite in number. But Sri Krishna uses the word *Samkhya* to indicate Self-knowledge. His concept of yoga is comprehensive of all the forms of *Sadhanas* though the path of karma predominates among them.

Theory and practice are the two aspects of every branch of knowledge. Of these two, the former pertains to the intellectual grasp and clarification while the latter to the translation of it into action. One is the pure science and the other, the applied science. An architect conceives of an edifice. At that stage it is an ideal. He explains it clearly to others; then it is theory. When he actually builds it he gives it a practical shape. *Samkhya* and yoga are the theory and practice of religion. They do not come into conflict one with the other. They augment each other. Rare indeed it is to know of the glory of Atman. And life gets enriched as Atman is known. Yoga is none other than living the life abundantly. By the practice of yoga mind grows in purity. To the purified mind the concept of Atman becomes progressively lucid. This is how *Jnana* and yoga mutually aid.

Truths pertaining to Atman have to be enquired into. What is known thereby has to be put into prac-

Reality in its own way. All the five senses together pay homage in their respective ways to the Sound-Reality which is Sri Krishna. A concentrated mind opens realms of the Reality unknown to the ordinary. Through one-pointedness, realization of the Reality and at-one-ment with It is possible. This exalted state can be attained by means of *Samkhya* and yoga merging into one. The one who is firm-in-mind is therefore the best among men.

In whatever direction a ship may be sailing, the compass needle in it always points to the north. Even so amidst all eventualities in life the mind of the knowing man is always fixed on the Ideal.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The ways of the infirm-in-mind are as follows :-

The Way of the Worldly — 42-44

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीतिवादिनः ॥ ४२

याम् इमाम् पुष्पिताम् वाचम् प्र-वदन्ति अ-विपश्चितः ।
वेद-वाद-रताः पार्थ न अन्यत् अस्ति इति वादिनः ॥

*yāṁ imāṁ puṣpitāṁ vācaṁ pravadanty avipaścitaḥ* ।
*vedavādaratāḥ pārtha nā 'nyad astī 'ti vādinaḥ* ॥

याम् *yāṁ* which इमाम् *imāṁ* this पुष्पिताम् *puṣpitāṁ* flowery वाचम् *vācaṁ* speech प्रवदन्ति *pravadanti* utter अविपश्चितः *avipaścitaḥ* the unwise वेदवादरताः *vedavāda-ratāḥ* taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha न *na* not अन्यत् *anyat* other अस्ति *asti* is इति *iti* thus वादिनः *vādinaḥ* saying

**The unwise who delight in the flowery words disputing about the Vedas say that there is nothing other than this. 42**

just as a day's food has its own nourishment. If a wrong medicine be administered to a patient, instead of its healing the disease, it may lead to the decease of the person The practice of yoga is not fraught with any danger of this kind. Any little practice of it, gives to that extent a glimpse into the nature of Atman. The fear of death is the greatest of all. As Atman is being understood this fear ceases

The way of right understanding and application thereof is as follows .—

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ ४१

वि-अव-साय-आत्मिका बुद्धि एका इह कुरु-नन्दन ।
बहु-शाखाः हि अन्-अन्ताः च बुद्धय अ-वि-अव सायिनाम् ॥

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir eke 'ha kuru nandana* ।
*bahuśākhā hy anantāś ca buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām* ॥

व्यवसायात्मिका *vyavasāyātmikā* one pointed बुद्धि *buddhih* determination एका *ekā* single इह *iha* here कुरुनन्दन *kuru nandana* O joy of the Kurus बहुशाखाः *bahuśākhāh* many-branched हि *hi* indeed अनन्ताः *anantāh* endless च *ca* and बुद्धय *buddhayah* thoughts अव्यवसायिनाम् *avyavasāyinām* of the irresolute

**To the firm-in-mind, O joy of the Kurus, there is in this but one decision; many-branching and endless are the decisions of the infirm-in-mind. 41**

A number of students work at a problem in mathematics Wrong answers they get are numberless and they are constantly shifting But when the right answer is arrived at by a smart student, he no

**There is no fixity of mind for them who cling to pleasure and power and whose discrimination is stolen away. 44**

The desire-ridden are those who have not risen to ethical and spiritual levels; they are the unrefined among the human. Their sole aim in life is to hunt after vulgar enjoyments here and hereafter. Their learning, enquiry and power of speech are all directed to this base end. The ritualistic portions in the Vedas pander merely to the low tastes of the crude happiness-hunters. Rites of this kind in the Vedas are useful to only those who seek to prolong the wheel of birth for the sake of several enjoyments. Though the Vedas are the oldest literature in the world, all that they contain are not sublime and elevating. The needs of the vulgar are also met in them.

Enjoyment of pleasure and happiness is not the goal of the human life. The attainment of perfection is its supreme object. The means for it is to be absorbed in *Samkhya* and yoga. Rituals simply distract the mind. *Samadhi* cannot be had from them.

The vulture soars high up in the sky. But its eyes are always on the carrion and carcass below on earth. However much one may be learned in the Vedas, as long as one's eyes are fixed on sense-pleasures one acts like a vulture. Spiritual enlightenment is not to the one given to lust and greed.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What ought to be the ideal in life? The answer comes :—

**The Key to Yoga—45-53**

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ ४५

sensations found in man are in the plants as well. When questioned as to how he could probe into that mystery, he replied, "To know all about the plants I myself became a plant mentally." He meant to say that the unknown becomes known through concentration and attention.

Reaching Godhood, the hardest of all, is possible to none but the firm-in-mind. The one-pointed devotion of the Gopi, Srimati Radha to Sri Krishna illustrates this fact. Her mind and sense organs function exclusively for the communion with Sri Krishna. All her mentations are directed to Him. Whatever her eyes see are all associated with Him. The ears ever bring to her messages pertaining to her Darling. The food she eats comes from Him. His grace is her life. Another extraordinary phenomenon presents itself through this milk-maid. When the mind gets fully concentrated the sense organs assume new powers. They are able to function one for the other. The melody emanates from Sri Krishna's flute; it comes floating in the air until it contacts Radha's ears. Instantaneously her mind becomes the receiving as well as the broadcasting instrument of that sound. The within and the without become one symphony. According to her experience as the all-pervading Nada-brahmam, Sri Krishna alone is contacted at all levels. There is nothing strange in her ears sensing the Sound-Reality; the olfactory sense experiences the fragrance in It; consistent with its capacity the sense of touch feels the presence of the Sound-Reality; and the tongue tastes the Sound-

entangled, what is beyond is unfettered. The means to get into it is also presented herein. Heat and cold, pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat—duals such as these are called the pairs of opposites. They are inevitable in the phenomenal existence. When a person refuses to be affected favourably or adversely by these happenings and when he maintains his even-mindedness, he is said to be making progress in self-culture. The term *yoga-kshema* requires to be clarified. *Yoga* is the act of seeking for the needful earthly things and *kshema* the act of keeping carefully, such of the things procured. But the spiritual aspirant ought to be unconcerned with getting and keeping them. As all beings get, as a matter of course, the air they require for breathing, the spiritual aspirant gets his bare bodily requirements without effort. Such is the law of spiritual life. The aspirant deviates from the path when he gives undue attention to getting and keeping them. As one gets his being centred in the Self, he transcends the phenomenal existence.

If the word 'Gita' be rapidly repeated it would sound, 'Tagi, Tagi...' And Tagi is a modification of Tyagi—the man of renunciation. Renunciation of the phenomenal existence is the gist of the Gita.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Whatever a man wants for his earthly life can be procured here and he can live a happy life. Instead, what is it that one gets by transcending the three Gunas? The answer comes:—

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥ ४६

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपराः जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३

काम-आत्मानः स्वर्ग-पराः जन्म-कर्म-फल-प्र-दाम् ।
क्रिया-विशेष-बहुलाम् भोग-ऐश्वर्य-गतिम् प्रति ॥

*kāmātmānaḥ svargaparāh janma karma phala pradām* |
*kriyā viśesa bahulām bhogaiśvarya gatim prati* ||

कामात्मान *kāmātmānah* full of desires स्वर्गपरा *svargaparāh* with heaven as their highest goal जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् *janma karma phala pradām* leading to (new) birth as the result of their works क्रिया विशेष बहुलाम् *kriyā viśesa bahulām* exuberant with various specific actions भोगैश्वर्य गति प्रति *bhogaiśvarya gatim prati* for the attainment of pleasure and lordship

**Who are desire-ridden, who hold the attainment of heaven as the goal of birth and its activities, whose words are laden with specific rites bringing in pleasure and lordship. 43**

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥ ४४

भोग-एश्वर्य-प्र-सक्तानाम् तया अप-हृत-चतसाम् ।
वि-अव-साय-आत्मिका बुद्धिः सम्-आ धौ न वि-धीयते ॥

*bhogaiśvarya prasaktānām tayā 'pahrtacetasām* |
*vyavasāyātmikā buddhih samādhau na vidhīyate* ||

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानाम् *bhogaiśvarya prasaktānām* of the people deeply attached to pleasure and lordship तया *tayā* by that अपहृतचेतसाम् *apahrta cetasām* whose minds are drawn away व्यवसायात्मिका *vyavasāyātmikā* determinate बुद्धि *buddhih* reason समाधौ *samādhau* in Samadhi न *na* not विधीयते *vidhīyate* is fixed

The courtesan of a prince heeds not the courting of a beggar on the road. The one enjoying the supreme bliss of communion with the Maker cares not for all earthly joys and enticements.

— Sri Ramakrishna

A man in a locality where there is only a tank of water has to content himself with it. Similarly the man not blessed with *Brahma-jnanam* has to be contented with mundane happiness only. A contention to this effect is likely to be advanced. No, reconcile not yourself with vulgar existence, but prepare yourself as follows :—

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ ४७

कर्मणि एव अधि-कारः ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्म-फल-हेतुः भूः मा ते सङ्गः अस्तु अ-कर्मणि ॥

*karmaṇy evā 'dhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana* ।
*mā karma phala hetur bhūr mā te sango 'stv akarmaṇi* ॥

कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in work एव *eva* only अधिकारः *adhikāraḥ* right ते *te* thy मा *mā* not फलेषु *phaleṣu* in the fruits कदाचन *kadācana* at any time मा *mā* not कर्मफलहेतुः भूः *karma phala hetuḥ bhūḥ* let not the fruits of action be the motive मा *mā* not ते *te* thy सङ्गः *saṅgaḥ* attachment अस्तु *astu* let (there) be अकर्मणि *akarmaṇi* in inaction

**Seek to perform your duty; but lay not claim to its fruits. Be you not the producer of the fruits of karma; neither shall you lean towards inaction. 47**

There seems to be an anomaly and defeat of purpose in this injunction of the Lord. Not an atom moves without a motive. Beings are all busy

त्रैगुण्य-विषया: वेदा: निः-त्रैगुण्यः भव अर्जुन ।
निर्-द्वन्द्वः नित्य-सत्त्व-स्थः निर्-योग-क्षेमः आत्म-वान् ॥

*traiguṇya viṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavā 'rjuna |*
*nirdvandvo nitya sattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān ||*

त्रैगुण्यविषया: *traiguṇya viṣayāḥ* deal with the three attributes वेदाः *vedāḥ* the Vedas निस्त्रैगुण्यः *nistraiguṇyah* without these three attributes भव *bhava* be अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna निर्द्वन्द्वः *nirdvandvaḥ* free from the pairs of opposites नित्यसत्त्वस्थः *nitya sattvasthaḥ* ever remaining in the Sattva (goodness) निर्योगक्षेमः *niryoga kṣemaḥ* free from (the thought of) acquisition and preservation आत्मवान् *ātmavān* established in the self

**The Vedas enumerate the three Gunas. You transcend the three Gunas, O Arjuna. Be free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, unconcerned with getting and keeping and centred in the Self.** **45**

*Prakriti* or the phenomenal universe is here designated as the Vedas; and this is the correct definition. The compiled literary works, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva are also called Vedas, because they deal with the working of the universe. They help the aspirant to understand intellectually, the function of *Prakriti*. So far, they are indispensable. When the Vedas are said to be imperishable, it refers to *Prakriti* which is eternal and not to the books which run the risk of being destroyed or neglected. More than all these, it is *Prakriti* that is constituted of the three Gunas—*Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*.

To be *Prakriti*-bound is not the goal of the enlightened human life. While the life here is

योगस्थः *yogasthaḥ* steadfast in yoga कुरु *kuru* perform कर्माणि संगम् *karmāṇi saṅgaṁ* attachment त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* O Dhananjaya सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः *siddhy asiddhyoḥ* in success and failure समः *samaḥ* the same भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having become समत्वम् *samatvaṁ* evenness of mind योगः *yogaḥ* yoga उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**Perform action, O Dhananjaya, being fixed in yoga, renouncing attachments, and even-minded in success and failure; equilibrium is verily yoga.** 48

The yogi holds all the activities taking place in him as the doings of the Lord. He places himself in the position of a willing servant, ever ready to execute orders. An attitude of this kind eliminates attachment. The master orders his servant to go to the next village and bring a particular person. The servant goes on the errand accordingly, but finds the person absent. There is no disappointment in him for this failure. He is commissioned to go on another day on which he is able to find the required person. There is no special elation over the success now. The servant is simply satisfied with carrying out orders effectively. It is in this manner that the yogi holds the successes and failures in his endeavours free from attachment and aversion.

The nature of the mind is to be elated in success and dejected in failure. But by remaining unperturbed by either, the mind gains in clarity and firmness. It is like the surface of water that has become placid and fit to reflect objects clearly. This even-mindedness is equilibrium. He is a yogi who keeps the

यावान् अर्थः उद-पाने सर्वतः सम्-प्लुत-उदके ।
तावान् सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य वि-जानतः ॥

*yāvān artha udapāne sarvataḥ saṁplutodake* ।
*tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ* ॥

यावान् *yāvān* as much अर्थ. *arthaḥ* use उदपाने *udapāne* in a reservoir सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* everywhere सप्लुतोदके *saṁplutodake* being flooded तावान् *tāvān* so much (use) सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* in all वेदेषु *vedeṣu* in the Vedas ब्राह्मणस्य *brāhmaṇasya* of the Brahmana विजानतः *vijānataḥ* of the knowing

**To an enlightened Brahmana all the Vedas are as useful as a tank when there is a flood everywhere. 46**

It is evident that a tank containing water is very useful in a place where water cannot be had from any other source. But nobody ever pays any attention to such a tank in a locality submerged everywhere with pure water. Likewise the Vedas and the scriptures are of use to those who are still in ignorance. By faithfully following the sacred books happiness can be obtained on earth and in heaven which are both in the region of the phenomenon. But the various spheres of relative existence become meaningless to the one illumined with *Brahma-jnanam*. It is infinite beatitude. All earthly and heavenly happinesses are mere rays of that endless brilliance. The food consumed in dream does not nourish the body; whereas what is consumed in the wakeful state gives succour both in the wakeful state and in sleep. Likewise *Brahma-jnanam* which leads to the absolute existence enriches the *Prakriti*-bound relative existence also abundantly.

A porter carries the luggage of a railway passenger from one platform to another. A co-passenger also carries for him one or two bundles of his, with a helpful attitude. Though the action is the same for the porter and the co-passenger their attitudes differ widely. The one works for a wage and the other for love. The wage-earner remains a cooly while the other evolves in mind. The majority in the world work like the wage-earner and make themselves wretched. But a few work for duty's sake expecting nothing in return. They ever assume the role of a giver and never that of a grabber. The more the water from a well is bailed out, the more fresh water sprouts in it. The more a man acts for duty's sake seeking nothing in return, the more he grows in yoga.

Does the equilibrium of mind add to its efficiency? The answer comes :—

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ ५०

बुद्धि-युक्तः जहाति इह उभे सु-कृत-दुस्-कृते ।
तस्मात् योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

*buddhiyukto jahātī 'ha ubhe sukṛta duṣkṛte* ।
*tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam* ॥

बुद्धियुक्तः *buddhiyuktaḥ* endowed with wisdom जहाति *jahāti* casts off इह *iha* in this life उभे *ubhe* both सुकृत-दुष्कृते *sukṛta duṣkṛte* good and evil deeds तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore योगाय *yogāya* to yoga युज्यस्व *yujyasva* devote thyself योगः *yogaḥ* yoga कर्मसु *karmasu* in actions कौशलम् *kauśalam* skill

either to gain something or to ward off something unwanted In the absence of such a motive no action needs be performed But the Lord induces Arjuna not to be motivated and at the same time to be intensely active Yes, herein lies the turning point in life from *Preyas* to *Sreyas* Good accrues from detachment and never from attachment Karma in itself is no evil, but it becomes so when mixed up with desire Desire tainted karma gives continuity to the wheel of birth and death The seekers after heavenly enjoyments are also slaves to desire Conquerors of desire are they who care not for the fruits of karma Freedom from desire is the real freedom When duty is discharged untarnished by desire, clarity of understanding ensues In addition to it, efficiency increases Karma therefore has to be performed perfectly by the aspirant unmindful of the fruits thereof

A boat may be floating on water, but no water should be allowed to get into it Man may live in the world but no wordly desire ought to take possession of him

—Sri Ramakrishna

How the desireless one works and lives in the world is being explained now —

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गम् त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ ४८

योग स्थ कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गम् त्यक्त्वा धनम्-जय ।
सिद्धि-असिद्धयो सम भूत्वा समत्वम् योग उच्यते ॥

*yogasthah kuru karmāni sangam tyaktvā dhanamjaya |*
*siddhy asiddhyoh samo bhūtvā samatvam yoga ucyate ||*

Mahabharata has it, a woman that served her husband dispassionately rose in yoga superior to an ascetic who gained by austerity, the psychic power to burn an intruding bird to ashes. A butcher also, in his turn, became a greater yogi than this ascetic by discharging his seemingly ugly duty without attachment and aversion.

Equanimity of mind comes to one free from likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion. He is a yogi. No new karma accrues to him. The momentum of the old karma wanes away. He gains in perfecting the mind.

A yogi seated in a Himalayan cave allows his mind to wander on unwanted things. A cobbler in a corner at the crossing of several busy roads of a city, is absorbed in mending a shoe, as an act of service. Of these two, the latter is a better yogi than the former.

— Swami Vivekananda

A question may rise as to which among the duties that fall to man's lot may be considered preferable. The answer comes :—

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ ५१

कर्म-जम् बुद्धि-युक्ताः हि फलम् त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्म-बन्ध-वि-निर्-मुक्ताः पदम् गच्छन्ति अन्-आमयम् ॥

*karmajaṁ buddhiyuktā hi phalaṁ tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ*
*janma bandha vinirmuktāḥ padaṁ gacchanty anāmayam*

कर्मजम् *karmajaṁ* action born बुद्धियुक्ताः *buddhiyuktāḥ* possessed of knowledge हि *hi* indeed फलम् *phalaṁ* the fruit त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned मनीषिणः *manīṣiṇaḥ* the wise जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः *janma bandha vinir*

mind in this poised state under all circumstances Spiritual growth is possible to him only who keeps the mind ever poised

Be in the world even as a maid servant in a rich man's house For all intents and purposes she claims her master's children and property as her own But at the core of her heart she knows that they do not belong to her and she remains firm in that attitude Seemingly own worldly things, but have no attachment to them As the maid servant can with ease relinquish her assumed ownership of the master s property, be prepared for separation from earthly possession

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The frame of mind that unbecomes a yogi is now dilated upon —

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ ४९

दूरेण हि अ-वरम् कर्म बुद्धि योगात् धनम्-जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणम् अनु इच्छ कृपणाः फल-हेतवः ॥

*dūrena hy avaram karma buddhiyogād dhanamjaya* ।
*buddhau śaranam anviccha krpanāh phalahetavah* ॥

दूरेण *dūrena* by far हि *hi* indeed अवरम् *avaram* inferior कर्म *karma* action बुद्धियोगात् *buddhiyogāt* than the yoga of wisdom धनञ्जय *dhanamjaya* O Dhananjaya बुद्धौ *buddhau* in wisdom शरणम् *śaranam* refuge अन्विच्छ *anviccha* seek कृपणा *krpanāh* wretched फलहेतवः *phalahetavah* seekers after fruits

**Motivated karma is, O Dhananjaya, far inferior to that performed in the equanimity of mind, take refuge in the evenness of the mind, wretched are the result-seekers.** **49**

यदा *yadā* when ते *te* thy मोहकलिलम् *moha kalilaṁ* mire of delusion बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect व्यतितरिष्यति *vyati tariṣyati* crosses beyond तदा *tadā* then गन्तासि *gantāsi* thou shalt attain निर्वेदम् *nirvedaṁ* to indifference श्रोतव्यस्य *śrotavyasya* of what has to be heard श्रुतस्य *śrutasya* of what has been heard च *ca* and

**When your understanding transcends the taint of delusion, then shall you gain indifference to things heard and those yet to be heard.** 52

After transcending the taint of delusion, the yogi is able to understand and distinguish between Atman and *Prakriti*, the Real and the unreal, the Being and the becoming. The Truth in Itself is realized. The phenomenal existence is then evaluated for what it is worth. The inquirer evaluates the dream. He does not attribute one value to the dream that he has heard of already and waits to attribute another value to the one that remains to be related to him. A *Brahma-jnani* hears of the scientific discoveries that have been so far made. He classifies them all as the various modifications of the phenomenal universe as cognized by the intellect which is itself a phase of the fleeting phenomenon. The new discoveries that remain to be recounted to him will also be brushed aside with the same remark. Events like the Mahabharata war present themselves as great and consequential to ordinary people. But the *Brahma-jnani* views them with utter indifference. The evolution and involution of the universe itself are meaningless to him.

**The one fixed in equanimity of mind frees oneself in this life from vice and virtue alike; therefore devote yourself to yoga; work done to perfection is verily yoga. 50**

Karma is classified as good or bad based on the result it produces Good karma is as much the cause as the bad one, for the continuity of the wheel of birth and death But the karma-yogi is not affected by karma of any kind This is due to his being fixed in equanimity — the state free from likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion A surgeon cuts and operates on the body of a patient The sick man's surviving the surgery or succumbing to it, does not make the doctor virtuous or vicious He does his duty very well for duty's sake If the patient dies while being operated on, the doctor does not feel guilty of murder He goes through the series of operations calmly because of his equanimity of mind But this very doctor dare not operate on his own ailing son, he seeks the help of another surgeon This diffidence is born of attachment leading to in-equanimity of mind Detached performance of duty adds to efficiency and the required equilibrium is maintained perfectly

This principle applies to all activities in life It is yoga to maintain equilibrium in the midst of all of them Work is executed very efficiently in poise only Attachment and aversion take away the efficiency from man Bhishma fought for the wicked to the best of his ability, but because of his complete detachment he was not tainted by his action As the

world after spiritual enlightenment, you will not have anxieties of the mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna now gets an opportunity to raise a question. He submits it before the Lord :—

### The Enlightened Defined — 54-72

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ॥ ५४

स्थित-प्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधि-स्थस्य के-शव ।
स्थित-धीः किम् प्र-भाषेत किम् आसीत व्रजेत किम् ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhisthasya keśava* ।
*sthitadhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य *sthitaprājñasya* of the sage of steady wisdom का *kā* what भाषा *bhāṣā* description समाधिस्थस्य *samādhisthasya* of the man merged in the superconscious state केशव *keśava* O Kesava स्थितधीः *sthitadhīḥ* the sage of steady wisdom किम् *kiṁ* what (how) प्रभाषेत *prabhāṣeta* speaks किम् *kiṁ* what (how) आसीत *āsīta* sits व्रजेत *vrajeta* walks किम् *kiṁ* how

**Arjuna said:**

**What, O Kesava, is the mark of the man of steadfast wisdom, steeped in Samadhi? How does the man firm in wisdom speak, how sit, how walk? 54**

All the three terms, *sthitaprajna*, *samadhistha* and *sthitadhi* connote the same. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. When such a one is in

*muktāḥ* freed from the fetters of birth पदम् *padam* the abode गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* go अनामयम् *anāmayam* beyond evil

**The wise, imbued with evenness of mind, renouncing the fruits of their actions, freed from the fetters of births, verily go to the stainless state. 51**

The yogi views all forms of karma alike, imbued as they are with misery in varying degrees He converts the misery-laden karma into the misery-freed one It is characteristic of karma to perpetuate the wheel of birth and death But the yogi in his wisdom renders it effectless in this respect Converting evil into good is the best of all dexterities Lord Siva converts the world-destroying poison into the world saving nectar The yogi walks the way of Siva He handles the bondage producing karma in such a way that it becomes the freedom-yielding one, yoga is the panacea of all evils in the world

With the aid of the perishable phenomenon get at the Imperishable Noumenon

—Sri Ramakrishna

The attainment of the Imperishable is indicated in the following manner —

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ ५२

यदा ते मोह-कलिलम् बुद्धि वि अति-तरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर् वेदम् श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥

*yadā te moha kalilam buddhir vyatitarisyati |*
*tadā gantāsi nirvedam śrotavyasya śrutasya ca ||*

मनोगतान् *manogatān* of the mind आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self एव *eva* only आत्मना *ātmanā* by the Self तुष्टः *tuṣṭaḥ* satisfied स्थितप्रज्ञः *sthitaprajñaḥ* of steady wisdom तदा *tadā* then उच्यते *ucyate* (he) is called

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**When a man abandons, O Partha, all the desires of the heart and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, then is he said to be one stable in wisdom. 55**

This is the answer to the first part of Arjuna's question.

Fire is hot; it need not go anywhere in search of warmth. Even so Atman is Bliss. It imposes the bliss within on objects outside and goes in search of those objects believing that with their acquisition happiness can be gained. This search outside for happiness is *kama*. The grabbing modification of the mind is *kama*. The waves and ripples on the surface of water obscure the sight of the sand bed below. The ripples of *kama* in the mind obstruct the vision of Atman, the basis. All the same, the changeless bliss within reveals itself as the happiness coming from the sense-objects outside. When the mind is pacified by relinquishing all the *kamas*, the blissful Atman is realized in Its original glory. He is a *Brahma-jnani* who intuits that the happiness he sought for in the world outside, is in its entirety in himself. He remains Self-satisfied. The aspirant who seeks to wipe out all desires and to pacify the mind is the one who practises yoga.

He who is dead as it were when alive, that is to say, as desireless as a corpse, becomes competent for *Brahma-jnanam*.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

An aspirant may wonder as to when such an exalted state would come to him. The assurance comes:—

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिः तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३

श्रुति-वि-प्रति-पन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निः-चला ।
सम्-आ-धौ अ-चला बुद्धिः तदा योगम् अव-आप्-स्यसि ॥

*śrutivipratipannā te yadā sthāsyati niścalā* |
*samādhāv acalā buddhiḥ tadā yogam avāpsyasi* ||

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना *śrutivipratipannā* perplexed by what thou hast heard ते *te* thy यदा *yadā* when स्थास्यति *sthāsyati* shall stand निश्चला *niścalā* immovable समाधौ *samādhau* in the Self अचला *acalā* steady बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect तदा *tadā* then योगम् *yogaṁ* self-realization अवाप्स्यसि *avāpsyasi* (thou) shalt attain

**When your intellect, tossed about by the conflict of opinions, has become poised and firmly fixed in equilibrium, then you shall get into yoga. 53**

It is but natural for man to pay heed to conflicting views and to get confused over them. But nobody raises the query "Am I alive or dead?" And nobody's opinion is sought in this matter. Man's existence is self-evident to him. When mentation ceases in equilibrium, it is called *Samadhi* or Spiritual Illumination. Atman in Its Original Splendour is then realized. Yoga reaches its culmination here. This state of Pure-Consciousness is the goal of life.

First attain Godhood and then pursue the worldly things. Do not proceed in the reverse order. If you enter the life in the

defects in those he is fond of. Detached love is what is wanted. Man is not fond of a poisonous snake, but he fears it. Fear is born of ignorance; it deprives man of manliness; it is worse than death. Fearlessness is the message of the Upanishads. The *Jnani* fears nothing including death. Practice of fearlessness is imperative for not only the seeker of wisdom, but also for all who want to thrive in life. Bhima the brother immediately elder to Arjuna is one not at all attached to the Kauravas and in no way afraid of them; but he was bitterly angry with them. Anger unbecomes an ethically and spiritually evolving one. It robs one of discrimination. The mind that is free from attachment, fear and anger evolves in excellence. The *Brahma-jnani* is necessarily established in these virtues.

Muni is he whose mind delights in the Self as steadily and uninterruptedly as the unbroken flow of oil poured from its container.

The man given to envy, anger and timidity never grows in spiritual stature. — Sri Ramakrishna

How does the man of wisdom contact the external world ? The answer comes :—

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७

यः सर्वत्र अन्-अभि-स्नेहः तत् तत् प्र-आप्य शुभ-अशुभम् ।
न अभि-नन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रति-स्थिता ॥

*yaḥ sarvatrā 'nabhisnehas tat-tat prāpya śubhāśubham* ।
*nā 'bhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā* ॥

*Samadhi* what becomes of his mind? When he projects the mind on external things, how does he behave?

The concluding eighteen stanzas in this chapter are devoted to the definition of a *Brahma-jnani*. Those who want to improve their handwriting choose to copy the model letters and alphabets And this method is invariably adopted in all fields In picking up the language, painting and singing the perfect ones are imitated, there is no other way of acquiring knowledge and art *Brahma-jnanam* is no exception to this While the illumined one established in perfection is being defined, the method and the means to attain that state are also contained in that definition The goal and the paths thereof are simultaneously presented A diligent enquiry into them and an ardent practice are wanted to achieve the Ideal

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५

प्र-जहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनः-गतान् ।
आत्मनि एव आत्मना तुष्टः स्थित-प्रज्ञः तदा उच्यते ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān* |
*ātmany evā 'tmanā tustah sthitaprajñas tado 'cyate* ||

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said

प्रजहाति *prajahāti* casts off यदा *yadā* when कामान् *kāmān* desires सर्वान् *sarvān* all पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha

यदा *yadā* when संहरते *saṁharate* withdraws च *ca* and अयम् *ayaṁ* this (yogi) कूर्मः *kūrmaḥ* tortoise अङ्गानि *aṅgāni* limbs इव *iva* like सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* everywhere इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the senses इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः *indriyārthebhyaḥ* from the sense-objects तस्य *tasya* of him प्रज्ञा *prajñā* wisdom प्रतिष्ठिता *pratiṣṭhitā* is steadied

**When also, like a tortoise its limbs, he can withdraw the senses from sense-objects his wisdom is then set firm. 58**

The tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell with ease and spontaneity to protect itself against possible dangers. It then rests satisfied with the self-provided security. It is as natural as this for a man of perfection to be an introvert. This process is technically known as *pratyāhāra*. As a man bolts from within and sits indoors undisturbed, the *Jnani* delights in the Self; and this is the norm with him. Just as a fish put back into water, the knower of Brahman derives bliss from the core of his being. Complete mastery over the senses is characteristic of the Illumined.

Poisonous snakes fatally hurt people. But the snake-charmer handles them as if they are no creatures of consequence. More than that, he has quite a few of them coil, creep and writhe about his body. The senses, likewise, are undependable and treacherous too, in the case of the ordinary man. But they are ever tame and subservient to the knower of Atman.

**— Sri Ramakrishna**

The following three stanzas contain the answer to Arjuna's question as to how the Enlightened One sits.

Pacification of the mind is being explained now —

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६

दु खेषु अनु-उद्-विग्न-मना सुखेषु वि-गत-स्पृह ।
वीत-राग-भय क्रोधः स्थित-धी मुनि उच्यते ॥

*duḥkhesv anudvignamanāh sukhesu vigatasprhah* |
*vīta rāga bhaya krodhaḥ sthitadhīr munir ucyate* ||

दु खेषु *duhkhesu* in adversity अनुद्विग्नमना· *anudvignamanāḥ* of unshaken mind सुखेषु *sukhesu* in pleasure विगतस्पृहः *vigatasprhaḥ* without hankering वीतरागभयक्रोधः *vīta rāga bhaya krodhaḥ* free from attachment fear and anger स्थितधी *sthitadhīḥ* of steady wisdom मुनि· *munih* sage उच्यते *ucyate* (he) is called

**He whose mind is not perturbed by adversity, who does not crave for happiness, who is free from fondness, fear and anger, is the Muni of constant wisdom. 56**

There is no end to events in this world, which come as trials and tribulations to man. The way of the ordinary is to be afflicted by them. But the man of wisdom remains unperturbed, viewing them as unavoidable but effectless to the extent ignored By adding fuel to fire its volume and intensity increase. Desire for happiness increases similarly in a worldly man but never in a *Jnani*. In the midst of an ever increasing number of objects of happiness, he lives entirely unconcerned with them. He is further free from fondness, fear and anger. These three traits tarnish the mind. Fondness is attachment which robs the aspirant of discrimination. Man fails to see

mence. An aspirant is he who tries to sublimate the senses by associating them always with the Sublime.

A brother and sister were playing in a dense and bushy garden. All on a sudden the brother was missing. While the other was anxiously searching for him, a bear came out of a bush. The girl became stunned with fear. Finding the joke too severe for her, the brother threw off the mask of the bear and presented himself in his true form. The terrified girl came then to her senses and wondered that it was all the play of her own brother. In this manner Brahman puts on the mask of the phenomenon and allures or frightens the ignorant. But the Enlightened One is no more frightened or enticed. He transcends the senses. — **Sri Ramakrishna**

The nature of the uncontrolled senses :—

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ ६०

यततः हि अपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य वि-पश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्र-माथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभम् मनः ॥

*yatato hy api kaunteya puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ* ।
*indriyāṇi pramāthīni haranti prasabhaṁ manaḥ* ॥

यततः *yatataḥ* of the striving हि *hi* indeed अपि *api* even कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya पुरुषस्य *puruṣasya* of man विपश्चितः *vipaścitaḥ* (of the) wise इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the senses प्रमाथीनि *pramāthīni* turbulent हरन्ति *haranti* carry away प्रसभम् *prasabhaṁ* violently मनः *manaḥ* the mind

**The excited senses, O son of Kunti, impetuously carry away the mind of even a wise man, striving for perfection.** **60**

Treacherous are the senses. They are as impetuous as wild horses newly harnessed. Riding on

यः *yaḥ* he who सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere अनभिस्नेहः *anabhisnehaḥ* without attachment तत् *tat* that तत् *tat* that प्राप्य *prāpya* having obtained शुभाशुभम् *śubhāśubhaṁ* good and evil न *na* not अभिनन्दति *abhinandati* rejoices न *na* not द्वेष्टि *dveṣṭi* hates तस्य *tasya* of him प्रज्ञा *prajñā* wisdom प्रतिष्ठिता *pratiṣṭhitā* is fixed

**He who is unattached everywhere, who is not delighted at receiving good nor dejected at coming by evil, is poised in wisdom. 57**

This world is a mixture of good and evil. People who are attached to it are bound to have joy and sorrow. They oscillate helplessly between weal and woe. But the *Jnani* remains supremely above these turmoils. He is no creature of circumstances. From his mouth come neither words of praise nor those of censure. This is the implied answer to the question as to how he speaks.

For the man who sees from the peak of a hill, the tall trees, the grass, the ups and downs and everything on the plains below seem alike The *Brahma-jnani* likewise sees divinity alone in everything. He makes no distinction between the good and the bad and between the superior and the inferior

— Sri Ramakrishna

The self-mastery of the *Jnani* is now explained as follows :—

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८

यदा सम्-हरते च अयम् कूर्मः अङ्गानि इव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रिय-अर्थेभ्य तस्य प्र-ज्ञा प्रति-स्थिता ॥

*yadā saṁharate cā 'yaṁ kūrmo 'ṅgānī 'va sarvaśaḥ* ।
*indriyānī 'ndriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā* ॥

तस्य *tasya* his प्रज्ञा *prajñā* wisdom प्रतिष्ठिता *pratiṣṭhitā* (is) settled

**The yogi, having controlled them all, sits focussed on Me as the supreme goal. His wisdom is constant whose senses are under subjugation. 61**

Mind cannot occupy itself at the same time with two conflicting thoughts. In the auto-suggestion, "I shall efface sense pleasures," the idea of those pleasures is involved. It gets deep-rooted in the mind. In a favourable future situation this hidden idea sprouts and puts forth branches. By nipping the tender branches on the surface, the stalk and the roots below are not destroyed. On the other hand, the stem gathers strength below. The unwanted idea thrives in the sub-conscious region of the mind; it is negatively fostered. The process has therefore to be reversed by substituting a positive idea such as, "I shall delight in the glory of the Lord." When this wholesome idea gains in strength the other gets purged away. Healthy ideas wipe out the unhealthy ones. As devotion to the Lord increases, the wild vehemence of the mind gets tamed down.

No thought of any sense-indulgence crops up in the mind while one is bitterly bereaved of a dearly loved relative. Similarly no vulgar thought crops up in the mind of the one devoted to the Divine. The turbulent senses in him become subdued soon.

— Sri Ramakrishna

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ ६२

ध्यायतः विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गः तेषु उप-जायते ।
सङ्गात् सम्-जायते कामः कामात् क्रोधः अभि-जायते ॥

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९

विषयाः वि-नि-वर्तन्ते निर्-आ-हारस्य देहिनः ।
रस-वर्जम् रसः अपि अस्य परम् दृष्ट्वा नि-वर्तते ॥

*viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ* ।
*rasavarjaṁ raso 'py asya paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate* ॥

विषयाः *viṣayāḥ* the objects of senses विनिवर्तन्ते *vinivartante* turn away निराहारस्य *nirāhārasya* abstinent देहिनः *dehinaḥ* of the man रसवर्जम् *rasavarjaṁ* leaving the longing रसः *rasaḥ* longing (taste) अपि *api* even अस्य *asya* of his परम् *param* the supreme दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen निवर्तते *nivartate* turns away

**Sense objects drop out for the abstinent man, though not the longing for them. His longing also ceases when he intuits the Supreme. 59**

The senses of those fallen sick become unfit for indulgence; but the craving in them for sense enjoyment persists. They harbour the hope of being able to enjoy after recovery. A convict in prison is forced to abstain from sense enjoyments; but the hankering for them dwells in his heart. While the body and the senses are under restraint, the mind wanders. The mental make up of the beginner in austerity is not far removed from that of the patient or the prisoner. Subtle tendencies hover about in him.

Seeds that are burnt do not sprout any further. Similarly the vagrant mind gets vanquished once for all with the dawn of the Knowledge Supreme. A *Jnani* is he in whom mentation has lost its vehe-

A man goes to his office every day seeing on the road many people, but not taking note of them. Like mere phantoms they appear and disappear. An attractive figure one day left a faint impression in his mind. On the following day the same figure drew a little more of his attention. Subsequent sights of that lovely figure made him cogitate; it was a pretty young woman that took possession of his mind. He developed attachment to, and picked up acquaintance with her, which steadily grew into friendship. Then came in him the desire to make the charming woman his own. Rivalry now ensued between him and another young man courting her. Competition between the two changed into bitter anger.

What else is anger if it is not an obstructed desire? From the sort of anger provoked in one, the nature of the desire lurking in one can easily be detected. Anger is temporary insanity. When the mind is occasionally upset it is anger, when permanently, it is lunacy. In effect both are the same; delusion ensues in either case.

In the woodlands the trees, creepers and plants are all easily discernible. But when there is a dust laden tempest the trees are tossed so much that one cannot be distinguished from another. It is a mass of confusion. Akin to this is the state of mind given to anger. It gets deluded first; next comes the loss of memory of things good and bad. A violence is resorted to indiscriminately, paving the way for self-destruction.

them is risky to life. The major portion of the spiritual discipline to which an aspirant subjects himself is actually the warfare that he carries on with the wayward senses. Innumerable are the defeats that he suffers at their hands at the initial stage. Repentance so much spoken of by a section of theologians as a means to win the mercy of the Maker is none other than the moral man chewing the cud of the rebuffs and reverses that he has had from the restive senses.

Conquest of the senses is the means for the attainment of excellence here and hereafter. The refinement of an individual or a society is measured by the yardstick of sense-control.

People who live in localities infested with venomous creatures should always be alert and mindful of the danger Even so, people intent on spiritual growth should guard themselves against indulgent senses tainted with lust and greed

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The means to subdue the senses :—

**तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।**
**वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१**

तानि सर्वाणि सम्-यम्य युक्तः आसीत मद्-परः ।
वशे हि यस्य इन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रति-स्थिता ॥

*tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya yukta āsīta matparaḥ ।*
*vaśe hi yasye 'ndriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā ॥*

तानि *tāni* them सर्वाणि *sarvāni* all संयम्य *saṁyamya* having restrained युक्त *yuktaḥ* joined आसीत *āsīta* should sit मत्परः *matparaḥ* intent on me वशे *vaśe* under control हि *hi* indeed यस्य *yasya* whose इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* senses

wandering on unholy concerns. While the earthly remains of both were fittingly disposed, their souls as well were assigned their fitting regions. Beware of your thoughts and everything will be all right with you.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

On what should the mind, weaned from the senses, be placed? The answer comes:—

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४

राग-द्वेष-वि-युक्तैः तु विषयान् इन्द्रियैः चरन् ।
आत्म-वश्यैः वि-धेय-आत्मा प्र-सादम् अधि-गच्छति ॥

*rāga dveṣa viyuktais tu viṣayān indriyaiś caran* ।
*ātmavaśyair vidheyātmā prasādam adhigacchati* ॥

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैः *rāga dveṣa viyuktaiḥ* free from attraction and repulsion तु *tu* but विषयान् *viṣayān* objects इन्द्रियैः *indriyaiḥ* with senses चरन् *caran* moving आत्मवश्यैः *ātmavaśyaiḥ* self-restrained विधेयात्मा *vidheyātmā* the self-controlled प्रसादम् *prasādaṁ* to peace अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* attains

**But the disciplined yogi, moving among objects with the senses under control, and free from attraction and aversion, gains in tranquillity. 64**

The senses are extrovert by nature. They ramble in fields external. Those objects that are pleasing to them are hugged while those others that are displeasing, shunned. A closer study reveals that these senses are themselves instruments in the hands of the mind. As goaded on by the mind they indulge in attraction and aversion.

*dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣū 'pajāyate |*
*saṅgāt saṁjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate ||*

ध्यायत *dhyāyataḥ* thinking विषयान् *viṣayān* (on) objects of the senses पुंस *puṁsaḥ* of a man सग *saṅgaḥ* attachment तेषु *teṣu* in them उपजायते *upajāyate* arises सगात् *saṅgāt* from attachment सजायते *saṁjāyate* is born काम *kāmaḥ* desire कामात् *kāmāt* from desire क्रोध *krodhaḥ* anger अभिजायते *abhijāyate* arises

**Brooding on the objects of senses, man develops attachment to them; from attachment comes desire; from desire anger sprouts forth. 62**

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३

क्रोधात् भवति स मोह स-मोहात् स्मृति वि भ्रम ।
स्मृति भ्रम्शात् बुद्धि-नाश बुद्धि-नाशात् प्र नश्यति ॥

*krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ sammohāt smṛtivibhramaḥ |*
*smṛti bhraṁśād buddhināśo buddhināśāt praṇaśyati ||*

क्रोधात् *krodhāt* from anger भवति *bhavati* comes संमोह *sammohaḥ* delusion समोहात् *sammohāt* from delusion स्मृतिविभ्रम *smṛtivibhramaḥ* loss of memory स्मृति भ्रशात् *smṛti bhraṁśāt* from loss of memory बुद्धि नाश *buddhi nāśaḥ* the destruction of discrimination बुद्धिनाशात् *buddhināśāt* from the destruction of discrimination प्रणश्यति *praṇaśyati* (he) perishes

**From anger proceeds delusion; from delusion, confused memory; from confused memory the ruin of reason; due to the ruin of reason he perishes. 63**

What is enunciated here may be explained through a concrete example as follows —

प्र-सादे सर्व-दुःखानाम् हानिः अस्य उप-जायते ।
प्रसन्न-चेतसः हि आशु बुद्धिः परि-अव-तिष्ठते ॥

*prasāde sarvaduḥkhānāṁ hānir asyo 'pajāyate* ।
*prasannacetaso hy āśu buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate* ॥

प्रसादे *prasāde* in peace सर्वदुःखानाम् *sarvaduḥkhānāṁ* (of) all pains हानिः *hāniḥ* destruction अस्य *asya* of him उपजायते *upajāyate* arises प्रसन्नचेतसः *prasannacetasaḥ* of the tranquil-minded हि *hi* because आशु *āśu* soon बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect पर्यवतिष्ठते *paryavatiṣṭhate* becomes steady

**In tranquillity, all his sorrow is destroyed. For the intellect of the tranquil-minded is soon anchored in equilibrium. 65**

This world is a mixture of good and evil. But the majority of people see more of evil than good in it. Some among them hope that when the world gets rectified there is the possibility of their enjoying more of peace of mind. Cognizing evil in the world and mind being given to restlessness are interrelated. Evils seen outside are all, in fact, the projections of the mind; they have no external reality. As the mind gets purified, seeing of evil gets minimized. Grounds for becoming a prey to sorrow are accordingly cut down. When the mind becomes perfectly pure all evils and all sorrow automatically vanish. Keeping the mind even under all circumstances is the means to gain in purity.

What appears as the world is verily the Divinity. Creating relationship with It on this basis leads to the purification of mind. Poise and placidity are the

The prolonged bitter anger in the two wooers of the woman burst one day into a rage A scuffle ensued in which one tried to do away with the other They forgot in the excitement about the severe punishment that the law of the land metes out for attempted murder Both were jailed and the woman had her own lover to marry Loss of discrimination paves the way for self-destruction

A minute peepal seed gets into a crack in a wall, sprouts, grows and rents the wall asunder Similarly an evil thought germinates in the mind, develops in its own way and wrecks the man ultimately Thought can make *or mar man Good thought mends and* makes man while the evil one ends him

A holy man was living in a temple Nearby was the house of a harlot Noticing how the profligate ones were frequenting her house he once called the woman and warned her against her evil ways She lamented over her lot and prayed to the Lord for forgiveness although she could not put an end to her base profession The annoyed anchorite now started recording her lapses by piling a pebble every time a libertine visited her When the heap of pebbles grew large, the holy man summoned the prostitute to his presence and censured her severely pointing out to her the *pyramid like enormity of her sins The heart-broken* whore died that very night appealing to the Almighty for deliverance from the debauched body Strangely enough, that very night the holy man also departed The defiled remains of the former was cast away as food to vultures and jackals, but that of the latter was interred with due honours Lo, the development of this scene was quite different in *Yama loka* The soul of the prostitute was escorted to *Vaikuntha* while that of the anchorite was consigned to hell The excited holy man demanded an explanation for this injustice The reply came that inviolable justice alone prevailed in the creation of the Lord Although living in a polluted body the prostitute's mind was ever fixed on the Divine, whereas the mind of the man in the holy body was always

of self-culture *buddhi* or right understanding is developed. It makes the mind profound, which state being known as *bhāvanā*. The one devoid of profundity does not get at *śānti*—the serenity of mind. How can there be happiness to one with a disturbed mind?

Excellences such as deep discrimination, benign mentation, solemn bearing and unbroken joy emanate from the practice of yoga. He who is indifferent to this soul-elevating science paves the way for self-annihilation.

Clay allows itself to be moulded into any fine form; but baked clay is of no use for this purpose. Mind burnt by profane desires is incapable of taking divine moulds.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Why does not one with undisciplined mind get illumined? The answer comes:—

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवांभसि ॥ ६७

इन्द्रियाणाम् हि चरताम् यत् मनः अनु-वि-धीयते ।
तत् अस्य हरति प्रज्ञाम् वायुः नावम् इव अम्भसि ॥

*indriyāṇāṁ hi caratāṁ yan mano 'nuvidhīyate* |
*tad asya harati prajñāṁ vāyur nāvam ivā 'mbhasi* ||

इन्द्रियाणाम् *indriyāṇāṁ* senses हि *hi* for चरताम् *caratāṁ* wandering यत् *yat* which मनः *manaḥ* mind अनुविधीयते *anuvidhīyate* follows तत् *tat* that अस्य *asya* his हरति *harati* carries away प्रज्ञाम् *prajñāṁ* discrimination वायुः *vāyuḥ* the wind नावम् *nāvaṁ* boat इव *iva* like अंभसि *ambhasi* in the water

**Just as a gale pushes away a ship on the waters, the mind that yields to the roving senses carries away his discrimination. 67**

He is a yogi who has conquered his mind. He makes it revel in Atman. If it ever goes outward, it does so being untainted by attraction and aversion. There is purity as well as innocence in its contacting the external objects, with the result that the tranquillity of the mind is not disturbed. On the other hand calmness and clarity increase. It is a form of *Samadhi* for the mind to be fixed in purity and calmness, while making benign use of the senses.

Sri Ramakrishna's life exemplifies this fact. The sight of an extensive verdure below and dense black clouds above with a group of snow white cranes in flight in between, took him into the Beyond. While the make-up of Siva was going on on his person, the sense of touch with the holy ash all over the body transported him into the Infinite. Hearing of the divine name of the Lord was a sure means to put him in *Samadhi*. The aroma of the incense used in worship roused the divine consciousness in him. The taste of the sacramental food invoked his devotion to God. Thus all the five senses served him as gateways to the Noumenon. Instead of their being impediments they became instruments for the transcendental flights of the perfected mind of this disciplined yogi.

Now comes the answer to the question as to how the man of steady wisdom walks :—

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५

The very purpose of being blessed with the senses is defeated if they are not allowed to contact the objects. That they should be rendered defunct is not the teaching of the Lord. The deciding factor between good and evil is the attitude with which the senses are directed on the sense-objects. Perceiving them with covetousness is sin, while viewing them as objects of adoration is virtue. Gluttony and slavery to the tongue is sin; eating to keep the body fit for a noble purpose is virtue. Beholding the body of a person with a lustful eye is sin; viewing it as the temple of God is virtue. All the five senses can be sublimated and the sense-objects sanctified in such a way that the divinity alone is contacted in and through all of them. Sri Ramakrishna perfected his sense of sight so well that all womenfolk including the street-walker were to him veritable embodiments of the Divine Mother. Sublimation of the senses was at its zenith in him. Mastery over the senses in this manner makes one competent to gain intuitive knowledge of the Imperishable. This knowledge once obtained persists for ever.

Blinkers have to be used in order to break a horse to the rein. Otherwise it will not be tamed. Vulgar desires have to be done away with in order to obtain the Divine. Purity of mind, complete sense-control, desirelessness—these divine qualities make one competent to gain Godhood.

**— Sri Ramakrishna**

What is the transformation in the aspirant that the sublimation of the senses brings in its train? Here comes the answer :—

characteristics of the purified mind. Atman, the Reality, gets reflected best in it. Ultimately the pure mind itself gets merged in Atman.

After curdling, the milk is to be kept undisturbed in one place only so that it may coagulate into good curds. Change of place will have adverse effect Likewise mind is to be fixed on the Lord only for it to become calm and divine.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the harm accruing from allowing the mind to dissipate? The answer comes :—

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥ ६६

न अस्ति बुद्धिः अयुक्तस्य न च अ-युक्तस्य भावना ।
न च अ-भावयतः शान्तिः अ-शान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

*nā 'sti buddhir ayuktasya na cā 'yuktasya bhāvanā* ।
*na cā 'bhāvayataḥ śāntir aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham* ॥

न *na* not अस्ति *asti* is बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* knowledge अयुक्तस्य *ayuktasya* of the unsteady न *na* not च *ca* and अयुक्तस्य *ayuktasya* of the unsteady भावना *bhāvanā* meditation न *na* not च *ca* and अभावयत *abhāvayataḥ* of the unmeditative शान्तिः *śāntiḥ* peace अशान्तस्य *aśāntasya* of the peaceless कुतः *kutaḥ* whence सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness

**There is no wisdom in the fickle-minded; nor is there meditation in him. To the unmeditative there is no peace. And how can the peaceless enjoy happiness? 66**

Yoga is the science of self-culture. He who devoutly practises it is called a *yukta;* but he who is indifferent to it is an *ayukta.* It is by the practice

else. The same world opens up different vistas to different people in accordance with their dispositions.

To people who are sense-bound things earthly are all real and they are immersed in them ; they are wakeful to the mundane. To the *Brahma-jnani*, on the other hand, who has conquered the senses and who has awakened to divine consciousness, the spectacle is different. His intuition, his concepts, his percepts are all filled in with Divinity. Whatever is, is Brahman to him. He cognizes existence as Brahman and not as the mundane. According to the attainment, beings are attuned to different planes of Existence. The Enlightened one is in the finale of It.

With the realization of God everything undergoes transformation to the *Jnani*. It is God Himself that has become the phenomenal universe and all the beings in it. The son is then perceived as the boy Krishna. Father and mother undergo metamorphosis as the Divinity. The wife is no more his mate; he sees the Cosmic Mother in her. Recognizing God in all, adoration to Him takes place through the worshipful service of all.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The plenitude ensuing from *Brahma-jnanam* is as follows :—

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥ ७०

आ-पूर्यमाणम् अ-चल-प्रतिष्ठम् समुद्रम् आपः प्र-विशन्ति यद्-वत् ।
तद्-वत् कामाः यम् प्र-विशन्ति सर्वे सः शान्तिम् आप्नोति न काम-कामी ॥

*āpūryamāṇam acalapratiṣṭhaṁ*
*samudram āpaḥ praviśanti yadvat* ।
*tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve*
*sa śāntim āpnoti na kāmakāmī* ॥

A ship without a rudder is at the mercy of a strong wind. Nothing can be predicted as to where it will be shoved. Senses are involuntarily drawn to the sense-objects. Mind that follows in the wake of the senses is naturally led astray by them. As a rudderless ship does not reach its destination, so the misdirected mind does not contact Atman. The wick that contacts a flame gets lit; similarly the mind that communes with Atman gets illumined.

Sense-pleasures are like itching eczema. There is pleasure in violently scratching it; but the disease gets aggravated thereby. By yielding to sense-pleasures mind gets more entangled in them.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How shall the senses be handled then? The answer comes:—

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६८

तस्मात् यस्य महा-बाहो नि-गृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रिय-अर्थेभ्यः तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रति-स्थिता ॥

*tasmād yasya mahābāho nigṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ* ।
*indriyāṇī 'ndriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore यस्य *yasya* whose महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed निगृहीतानि *nigṛhītāni* restrained सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* completely इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the senses इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः *indriyārthebhyaḥ* from the sense-objects तस्य *tasya* his प्रज्ञा *prajñā* knowledge प्रतिष्ठिता *pratiṣṭhitā* is steady

**Therefore, O mighty-armed, his cognition is well poised, whose senses are completely restrained from their objects. 68**

knowledge-bliss. Modifications such as I and mine get merged in that beatitude.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What should the aspirant do so that he may gain access to this state? The answer comes:—

विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ ७१

वि-हाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमान् चरति निः-स्पृहः ।
निर्-ममः निर्-अहम्-कारः सः शान्तिम् अधि-गच्छति ॥

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhaḥ* ।
*nir mamo nir ahaṁkāraḥ sa śāntim adhigacchati* ॥

विहाय *vihāya* abandoning कामान् *kāmān* desires यः *yaḥ* that सर्वान् *sarvān* all पुमान् *pumān* man चरति *carati* moves about निःस्पृहः *niḥspṛhaḥ* free from longing निर्ममः *nir mamaḥ* devoid of ownership निरहंकारः *nir ahaṁkāraḥ* without egoism सः *saḥ* he शान्तिम् *śāntiṁ* to peace अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* attains

**That man attains Peace who lives devoid of longing, freed from all desires and without the feeling of "I" and "mine."** 71

As long as man is given to worldly desires he will not have peace of mind. Calmness comes to the extent craving is quelled. The feeling of "I" and "mine" leads man into bondage to karma. Agency and ownership are the modifications of mind that ensue from this feeling. Waves and billows rise up on the surface of the sea and put on appearances of separate volumes of water. It seems as if the sea is

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥ ६९

या निशा सर्व-भूतानाम् तस्याम् जागर्ति सम्-यमी ।
यस्याम् जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यत. मुनेः ॥

*yā niśā sarvabhūtānām tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī* ।
*yasyāṁ jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneḥ* ॥

या *yā* which निशा *niśā* night सर्वभूतानाम् *sarvabhūtānām* of all beings तस्याम् *tasyāṁ* in that जागर्ति *jāgarti* wakes संयमी *samyamī* the self-controlled यस्याम् *yasyām* in which जाग्रति *jāgrati* wake भूतानि *bhūtāni* all beings सा *sā* that निशा *niśā* night पश्यतः *paśyataḥ* (of the) seeing मुनेः *muneḥ* of the Muni

**That which is night to all beings, in that the disciplined man wakes; that in which all beings wake, is night to the Atman-cognizing Muni. 69**

The faculty of seeing varies with beings in the physical plane. While man is able to see distinctly in broad daylight, owls and tigers are not able to do so. Day is therefore virtually night to them; and what is night to man actually serves as day to them. For, they then discern well. Day and night as physical facts are one thing and as of practical value quite another for beings differently constituted.

Men are not all wakeful to the same thing. A thief is well posted with particulars in his field, while the rest are all hidden in darkness to him. To a gambler his game is as bright as day, other concerns being enshrouded as if in darkness. The learned see well into the literary world, unmindful of everything

**This, O Partha, is the Brahman state. Attaining this, none is bewildered. Being established in it even at the death-hour, a man gets into oneness with Brahman.** 72

Objects seen in dream have their value as long as that dream lasts. Pleasure and pain experienced in it have also their importance. But on coming to wakefulness, the dream world is rejected as delusion. *Brahma-nirvānam* is the highest state of existence, getting into which the ordinary wakefulness itself is equated with dream and set aside as valueless. Mundane existence no more deludes the *Brahma-jnani*.

*Brahma-nirvānam* is also designated as *Aparoksha-anubhūti*. It transcends the mind and the intellect. An individual short of this illumination is called a *Jivatman*. If he holds on to the body after intuiting it, he is classified as *Jivan-mukta*—freed while in the body. As all rivers re-enter the ocean and become one with it, all *Jivas* re-enter Brahman and get identified with that Absolute State. And this is the goal of life. If this state be attained even at the last moment when the body is about to drop, the man enters *Brahma-nirvānam*. He no more embodies.

The newly married daughter-in-law is given plenty of domestic work by the mother-in-law. But as she advances in pregnancy her work is reduced. After the birth of the child she is permitted to be busy all the while caressing the baby. Attainment of *Brahma-jnanam* is analogous to this. Through the devout discharge of one's duty one's mind gets purified and comes to know of the presence of the Lord in one's heart. Then work is

आपूर्यमाणम् *āpūryamānam* filled from all sides अचलप्रतिष्ठम् *acalapratisthām* based in stillness समुद्रम् *samudram* ocean आपः *āpah* waters प्रविशन्ति *pravisanti* enter यद्वत् *yadvat* as तद्वत् *tadvat* so कामाः *kāmāḥ* desires यम् *yam* whom प्रविशन्ति *pravisanti* enter सर्वे *sarve* all सः *sah* he शान्तिम् *sāntim* peace आप्नोति *āpnoti* attains न *na* not कामकामी *kāmakāmī* desirer of desires

**Not the desirer of desires, but that man attains Peace, in whom all desires merge even as rivers flow into the ocean which is full and unmoving. 70**

It is not possible for any one to add to, or subtract the volume of the ocean Though all the rivers of the world continue to empty themselves into it, its magnitude remains ever the same If the rivers ceased to flow in and evaporation went on as usual, even then the expanse of the ocean will be the same It is ever full The mind of the Muni is like the ocean. The sensations brought in by the sense-organs get themselves dissolved in the ocean of consciousness. No modifications of the mind such as desires, aversions, longings, feelings and thoughts take shape. The question of the mind getting muddled does not arise there It is a vast waveless ocean of consciousness Not a speck of mentation may be noticed in that infinitude He who is in this blessed state is a *Jivan mukta* — a free soul, even though embodied The very presence of an emancipated soul is a boon to the society In his presence the minds of aspirants automatically become pacified

There are mountains hills dales valleys and plains at the bottom of the ocean But they are not discernible on the surface Akin to it the *Jnani* in *Samadhi* experiences Infinite—existence-

# कर्मयोगः

## KARMA YOGA — THE YOGA OF ACTION

## CHAPTER III

Arjuna's Doubt — JnanaYoga and KarmaYoga are Complementary — The Greatness of Yajna — The Wheel of Life — Atman is Beyond Action — What the Spiritual Aspirant ought to do — How to Root out the Ego — Spiritual Practices Conforming to Dispositions — The Origin of Sin.

**Arjuna's Doubt — 1-2**

अर्जुन उवाच

**ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।**
**तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १**

ज्यायसी चेत् कर्मणः ते मता बुद्धिः जन-अर्दन ।
तत् किम् कर्मणि घोरे माम् नि-योजयसि के-शव ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te matā buddhir janārdana ।*
*tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore māṁ niyojayasi keśava ॥*

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

ज्यायसी *jyāyasī* superior चेत् *cet* if कर्मणः *karmaṇaḥ* than action ते *te* by thee मता *matā* thought बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* knowledge जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana तत् *tat* then किम् *kiṁ* why कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in action घोरे *ghore* terrible माम् *māṁ* me नियोजयसि *niyojayasi* thou engagest केशव *keśava* O Kesava

Arjuna said:

**If it is held by you, O Janardana, that knowledge is superior to action, why then do you, O Kesava, enjoin on me this terrible action?** 1

split up into many bits. But in fact it is one undivided mass of water. The ego, in this way, makes man feel he is a separate entity. And desire is the root-cause of this apparent individuality. With the cessation of desire the ego assuming "I" and "mine" disappears. What remains is the unmodified superconsciousness bathed in bliss. All ethical and spiritual life is directed to the elimination of the ego.

When the goat is slaughtered its body shakes for a while as if imbued with life. Similarly the ego of the *Jnani* undergoes slaughter when he attains illumination But a trace of the ego lingers just to carry on the bodily sustenance. But it has no power to bind him again to worldliness.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The consummation that comes along with spiritual illumination is as follows :—

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥ ७२

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ न एनाम् प्र-आप्-य वि-मुह्यति ।
स्थित्वा अस्याम् अन्त-काले अपि ब्रह्म-निर्वाणम् ऋच्छति ॥

*esā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha*
*nai 'nām prāpya vimuhyati* ।
*sthitvā 'syām antakāle 'pi*
*brahma nirvāṇam ṛcchati* ॥

एषा *eṣā* this ब्राह्मी *brāhmī* of Brahman स्थितिः *sthitih* state पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha न *na* not एनाम् *enām* this प्राप्य *prāpya* having obtained विमुह्यति *vimuhyati* is deluded स्थित्वा *sthitvā* being established अस्याम् *asyām* in this अन्तकाले *antakāle* at the end of life अपि *api* even ब्रह्म-निर्वाणम् *brahma nirvānam* oneness with Brahman ऋच्छति *ṛcchati* attains

Why do you place me alone in a dilemma? I am sure it is no intention of yours to lead me astray. I have supplicated to you for *Sreyas.* Do, therefore, guide me aright."

**JnanaYoga and KarmaYoga are Complementary — 3-8**

श्री भगवानुवाच

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ ३

लोके अस्मिन् द्वि-विधा निष्ठा पुरा प्र-उक्ता मया अन्-अघ ।
ज्ञान-योगेन सांख्यानाम् कर्म-योगेन योगिनाम् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*loke 'smin dvividhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayā 'nagha |*
*jñānayogena sāṁkhyānāṁ karmayogena yogināṁ ||*

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

लोके *loke* in world अस्मिन् *asmin* in this द्विविधा *dvividhā* twofold निष्ठा *niṣṭhā* path पुरा *purā* previously प्रोक्ता *proktā* said मया *mayā* by me अनघ *anagha* O sinless one ज्ञानयोगेन *jñānayogena* by the path of knowledge सांख्यानाम् *sāṁkhyānāṁ* of the Samkhyas कर्मयोगेन *karmayogena* by the path of action योगिनाम् *yogināṁ* of the yogis

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**The twofold path was given by Me, O sinless one, to the world in the beginning — the path of knowledge to the discerning, the path of work to the active. 3**

Cognizing the Self through the process of discrimination and detachment from the non-Self is known as the path of knowledge. Clarity of understanding comes as one continues to discharge one's duty with

steadily abandoned and constant communion resorted to until at-one-ment is reached.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे साङ्ख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṃvāde sāṃkhya yogo nāma dvitīyo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the second discourse designated

THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

---

school abandoning the studies. The training that the *Jivatman* gets in the school of Nature is similar to this.

*Naishkarmyam* and *Siddhi* connote the same; for, the state of perfection is that in which all activities are transcended. A fully ripe fruit may be said to have reached the state of perfection. Its taking form from the flower, its development, growth and maturity are all different stages of its activity, leading to actionlessness in perfect fruition. The fully ripe fruit severs its connection with the tree. But if it is plucked out before ripening its fulfilment remains incomplete.

Man's spiritual life or his progress towards *Sreyas* is akin to this. As the tender fruit grows receiving sustenance from the tree, so man marches towards perfection in and through the discharge of the duty fallen to his lot. He derives no benefit by violently snatching himself away from duty. Desireless action is the sure means to reach actionlessness.

The goal in life of man is to merge in Godhood. Make a reminder knot of this fact in a corner of your scarf and then plunge in the discharge of your duties.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

An unripe fruit plucked from a tree can be utilized for cooking purposes. Similarly abandoning karma, temporary rest can be had by the karma-bound man. Where is the harm in man's giving up work and living in peace for sometime at least? But the fact is this:—

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ २

वि-आ-मिश्रेण इव वाक्येन बुद्धिम् मोहयसि इव मे ।
तत् एकम् वद निस्-चित्य येन श्रेयः अहम् आप्-नुयाम् ॥

*vyāmiśreṇe 'va vākyena buddhim mohayasī 'va me* ।
*tad ekam vada niścitya yena śreyo 'ham āpnuyām* ॥

व्यामिश्रेण *vyāmiśrena* perplexing इव *iva* as it were वाक्येन *vākyena* with speech बुद्धिम् *buddhim* understanding मोहयसि *mohayasi* (thou) confusest इव *iva* as it were मे *me* my तत् *tat* that एकम् *ekam* one वद *vada* tell निश्चित्य *niścitya* for certain येन *yena* by which श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* bliss (the good or the highest) अहम् *aham* I आप्नुयाम् *āpnuyāṁ* may attain

**With these perplexing words, you are, as it were, confusing my comprehension. Tell me with certainty the path by pursuing which I may get at the Supreme.**

The Lord made it plain to Arjuna that he was not to abandon his duty for any reason whatsoever. After goading him to action He next put it to him to convert the bondage-creating karma into the bondage-breaking karma-yoga. The Lord's contention was that the karma-yogi alone could accomplish everything. He then pointed out the supremacy of *Jnanam*—enlightenment. That in spiritual illumination alone the acme of life was attained, was the conclusion of the Lord. He even extolled it as the Supreme.

This twofold emphasis created a doubt in the mind of Arjuna, which may be set forth as follows:— "Lord, you are the dispeller of the ignorance of beings; you are also the remover of their misery.

enlightenment. With the dawn of *Brahma-jnanam* they quit *Prakriti*, and get to actionlessness.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

If one attempts to abandon karma while being bound in *Prakriti* the consequence will be disastrous. How? The answer comes :—

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६

कर्म-इन्द्रियाणि सम्-यम्य यः आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रिय-अर्थान् वि-मूढ-आत्मा मिथ्या-आचारः सः उच्यते ॥

*karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya ya āste manasā smaran* ।
*indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate* ॥

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि *karmendriyāṇi* organs of action संयम्य *saṁyamya* restraining यः *yaḥ* who आस्ते *āste* sits मनसा *manasā* by the mind स्मरन् *smaran* remembering इन्द्रियार्थान् *indriyārthān* sense-objects विमूढात्मा *vimūḍhātmā* of deluded understanding मिथ्याचारः *mithyācāraḥ* hypocrite सः *saḥ* he उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**That deluded man is called a hypocrite who sits controlling the organs of action, but dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses. 6**

The functioning of the mind persists as long as the *Jivatman* is bound by *Prakriti*. And the way of the mind is to be ever assuming modifications. Thought waves continue to rise in it while the external sense organs are held under restraint. This conflict is harmful. It is like applying brake to the wheels of the locomotive while the throttle-valve is fully open. To shut out the steam first and then to apply the brake is the proper course. Any contrary

dispassion. Intellect clarified thus gets to know the Self clearly. The path of knowledge and the path of action are both thus conducive to the cognition of the Self. They are both verily great paths. Aspirants inclined to discrimination and those to duty are found in the world at all times. These paths therefore eternally exist along with man's aspiration for self-perfection.

How are these two ancient paths complementary to each other ? The answer comes :—

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४

न कर्मणाम् अन्-आरम्भात् नैस्-कर्म्यम् पुरुषः अश्-नुते ।
न च सम्-नि-असनात् एव सिद्धिम् सम्-अधि-गच्छति ॥

*na karmaṇām anārambhān naiṣkarmyam puruṣo 'śnute* ।
*na ca saṁnyasanād eva siddhiṁ samadhigacchati* ॥

न *na* not कर्मणाम् *karmaṇām* of actions अनारम्भात् *anārambhāt* from non-performance नैष्कर्म्यम् *naiṣkarmyam* actionlessness पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* man अश्नुते *aśnute* reaches न *na* not च *ca* and संन्यसनात् *saṁnyasanāt* from renunciation एव *eva* only सिद्धिम् *siddhiṁ* perfection समधिगच्छति *samadhigacchati* attains

**Man gains not actionlessness by abstaining from activity, nor does he rise to perfection by mere renunciation. 4**

The little ones seeking education take to schooling. But it is no intention of theirs to stick lifelong to educational institutions. They are to pass out after successfully completing the courses of study. It avails them nothing to come out of the

controlling आरभते *ārabhate* commences अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna कर्मेन्द्रियैः *karmendriyaiḥ* by the organs of action कर्मयोगम् *karmayogaṁ* karma yoga असक्तः *asaktaḥ* unattached सः *saḥ* he विशिष्यते *viśiṣyate* excels

**But he excels, O Arjuna, who, restraining the senses by the mind, unattached, directs his organs of action to the path of work.**

A hungry dog chained to a post scrambles and paws for a plate of food kept for him at a distance. Such is the case of the mind of the untrained man given to sense-life. Viewed ethically and spiritually, he is a hypocrite who allows his mind to wander on sense-objects while apparently curbing the senses. On the other hand an aspirant ought to change his attitude and seek to engage his mind on things divine. The mind disciplined this way chooses to engage the ever active and indulgent senses on things noble and elevating instead of on those, base and vulgar.

Discipline is imperative in all the detailed activities of the mind and the senses. The acts of cooking and eating may be cited as samples. An aspirant prepares wholesome food for offering to his chosen Deity. While doing so, there is no thought whatsoever of his tasting the dish. It is done in a worshipful mood. The food is then dedicated to the Deity. It is subsequently partaken of by the devotee as grace from the Lord and not as an object of sense-enjoyment. Its delicacy is relished as the glory of the Lord. Herein lies the difference between the indulgent and the disciplined. The former wastes

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ ५

न हि क -श्चित् क्षणम् अपि जातु तिष्ठति अ कर्म कृत् ।
कार्यते हि अ-वश कर्म सर्व प्र कृति जै गुणै ॥

*na hi kaścit ksanam api jātu tisthaty akarmakṛt* ।
*kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma sarvah prakṛtijaiḥ guṇaiḥ* ॥

न हि *na hi* not कश्चित् *kaścit* anyone क्षणम् *ksanam* a moment अपि *api* even जातु *jātu* verily तिष्ठति *tisthati* remains अकर्मकृत् *akarmakṛt* without performing action कार्यते *kāryate* is made हि *hi* for अवश *avaśaḥ* helpless कर्म *karma* action सर्व *sarvaḥ* all प्रकृतिजै *prakṛtijaiḥ* born of Prakriti गुणै *guṇaiḥ* by the qualities

**None can ever remain really actionless even for a moment; for everyone is helplessly driven to action by the Gunas, born of Prakriti. 5**

*Prakriti* or Nature is constituted of the three Gunas—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* It is ever in a state of flux In other words karma is inherent in *Prakriti*. Beings involved in *Prakriti* are therefore helplessly bound by karma Vain is their wish and attempt to rid themselves of action, eating, sleeping, breathing, beating of the heart—all these are nothing but karma From the atom up to the universe all are engaged in activities of innumerable types It is impossible for beings to renounce karma while being entangled in *Prakriti*

Those who are enlisted as indoor patients in a hospital cannot get out of it until they are cured After the cure is effected they have no need to be in the hospital Similarly beings that suffer from the ailment of ignorance are hospitalized in *Prakriti* They are being effectively treated with karma for

*niyataṁ kuru karma tvaṁ karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ।*
*śarīrayātrā 'pi ca te na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ* ॥

नियतम् *niyataṁ* bounden कुरु *kuru* perform कर्म *karma* action त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou कर्म *karma* action ज्यायः *jyāyaḥ* superior हि *hi* for अकर्मणः *akarmaṇaḥ* than inaction शरीरयात्रा *śarīrayātrā* maintenance of the body अपि *api* even च *ca* and ते *te* thy न *na* not प्रसिद्ध्येत् *prasiddhyet* would be possible अकर्मणः *akarmaṇaḥ* by inaction

**Engage yourself in obligatory work; for action is superior to inaction, and if inactive, even the mere maintenance of your body would not be possible. 8**

Bathing, eating, sleeping—activities such as these are classified as *nitya* karma or obligatory work. These are indispensable for a robust living. No new merit is acquired by performing an obligatory work; but if any one fails to perform it, then one incurs demerit. Eating, for example is an obligatory work. By regularly nourishing oneself, one does not emerge as a better person, but if one neglects one's nourishment one becomes weak and emaciated, which is a demerit.

Bodily existence is required to achieve the several ideals in life. Keeping the body fit is therefore accepted as an aid in making the pilgrimage of life. If the body be not perfect, life gets frustrated. Action is the means to maintain it well. Those who desire an abundant life ought to be fully engaged in activities.

One ought not to be satisfied with discharging the obligatory duties alone. For, they can only

action is disastrous to the locomotive When man adopts this kind of wrong restraint on himself in a violent way in order to control the senses, he ruins the personality Whatever mars man is evil While yet in ignorance man's pretension to the renunciation of action is sheer hypocrisy which he should not resort to

Two friends went out one night intent on any entertainment that they came by As they walked on they met with a pious gathering listening devoutly to the Holy Bhagavatam being explained One of the two suggested that they sat there and derived benefit from that sacred discourse But the other preferred some earthly enjoyment and walked away to a house of ill fame After a while the first man thought he made a mistake in choosing that holy assembly All the time he was cogitating over the pleasure his companion was enjoying The second man on the other hand was repenting of the base choice he had made and was imagining of the divine bliss his friend was sharing with the devotees The first man was sitting in a house of God and sinning while the second was craving for the divine though physically placed in a bad environment Sin and virtue accrue ever from the frame of mind and never from the restrictions imposed on the senses — Sri Ramakrishna

What then should the aspirant do? The answer comes —

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥ ७

य तु इन्द्रियाणि मनसा नि-यम्य आ-रभते अर्जुन ।
कर्म-इन्द्रियै कर्म-योगम् अ-सक्त स वि-शिष्यते ॥

*yas tv indriyāni manasā niyamyā 'rabhate 'rjuna ।*
*karmendriyaih karmayogam asaktah sa viśiṣyate ॥*

य *yaḥ* whoso तु *tu* but इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāni* the senses मनसा *manasā* by the mind नियम्य *niyamya*

bound by action तदर्थम् *tad artham* for that sake कर्म *karma* action कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya मुक्तसंगः *mukta sangaḥ* free from attachment समाचर *samācara* perform

**The world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of Yajna. Do therefore, O son of Kunti, earnestly perform action for Yajna alone, free from attachment.** 9

Competition, co-operation and self-dedication are the three ways in which beings make life a fulfilment. The lowest order of creation exists by sheer competition. In this stage, the struggle for existence is an endless warfare. The physically strong and the fittest thrive and prosper while the weak and the feeble are either left in the background or exterminated. This law of the survival of the fittest inexorably prevails in life at the physical level. Plants, birds and beasts bear testimony to it.

In the life at the mental plane, cruel competition gets minimized. Intelligent co-operation gains ground here. This process is also known as social life. Man is a social being though corporate life is not his exclusive prerogative. Other beings are also found very well at it. Corporate life is more conducive to growth and progress than the competitive one. The civilization of man is mainly based on his gregarious instinct. Collective peace and security are the bases for prosperity and progress in arts and sciences. Man enjoys these advantages much more than the lower order of creation.

away the mind and the senses while the latter weans and conserves them In this wise all the senses require to be fully engaged in the service of the Lord *Self-control culminates in self-fulfilment*

A deadly cobra was a terror to the wayfarers in a woodland The knowers of this fact scrupulously avoided that locality for this reason Once when a holy man was inadvertently passing that way the venomous creature made its appearance intent on its nefarious act But the benignly loving look of the saint brought a change in the snake Instead of biting him it looked meekly on the pious man He kindly advised the serpent not to hurt anybody And this enemy of mankind wholeheartedly took the advice After a long interval the holy man came again that way, thought of the converted cobra and searched for it To his dismay the creature was found mangled and half dead, wriggling in a hole When the matter was anxiously enquired into, the snake submitted that it was all the result of faithfully following the advice of the saint Because it stopped biting, people took to pelting it with pebbles and hurting it violently The deadly creature was forced to hide itself lest it should be done to death The saint smilingly rebuked it "I exhorted you not to hurt, but I did not prohibit you from hissing" The snake learned a lesson for life and thenceforth got on safely The unbridled senses are *like the poisonous snake playing havoc* among people The curbed senses are like the inactive snake almost beaten to death The sublimated senses cause harm to none while elevating their owner to sublimity

— Sri Ramakrishna

What, therefore, the aspirant ought to do, is enjoined as follows —

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।
शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥ ८

नियतम् कुरु कर्म त्वम् कर्म ज्याय हि अ-कमण ।
शरीर-यात्रा अपि च ते न प्र-सिद्ध्येत् अ-कमण ॥

righteous warfare to wipe out wickedness from the world is an act of *Yajna*. Increasing the wealth of the country not for self-aggrandizement but for people's welfare is definitely *Yajna*. Humble and obscure labourers such as hewers of wood, drawers of water, tillers of soil and carriers of load are also performing *Yajna* when they assume the attitude that with the sweat of their brow they are serving the Lord and His creation. It is the attitude that transforms the soul-entangling karma into the soul-emancipating *Yajna*. Divinity reveals itself best where *Yajna* takes place. That "*Yajna* is Vishnu" is an Upanishadic statement. Performance of *Yajna* leads man to *Sreyas*.

He lives in vain who does not utilize the human birth which is very rare to obtain, for the attainment of Divinity.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Has *Yajna* any place in cosmic plan? The answer comes:—

**सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।**
**अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेषवोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ १०**

सह-यज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरा उवाच प्रजा-पतिः ।
अनेन प्र-सविष्यध्वम् एष वः अस्तु इष्ट-काम-धुक् ॥

*sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā puro 'vāca prajāpatiḥ* ।
*anena prasaviṣyadhvam eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa kāma dhuk* ॥

सहयज्ञाः *sahayajñāḥ* together with sacrifice प्रजाः *prajāḥ* mankind सृष्ट्वा *sṛṣṭvā* having created पुरा *purā* in the beginning उवाच *uvāca* said प्रजापतिः *prajāpatiḥ* Prajapati अनेन *anena* by this प्रसविष्यध्वम् *prasaviṣyadhvaṁ* shall ye propagate एषः *eṣaḥ* this वः *vaḥ* your अस्तु

maintain man in the excellences he has so far acquired. But there are yet other excellences to acquire. New endeavours are the sure means to it. Crawling is a necessary step in a baby's life. But in remaining satisfied with it, the baby cannot evolve. He has further to stand, walk and run. Even so man progresses through new enterprises. There are those who hold that doing any new karma amounts to the creation of an additional bondage. The seeming progress on one side is nothing but bondage to karma on the other, is the view of these people. They advocate the avoidance of the chimera of action and its dreadful consequence in the shape of slavery to action. But this negative position is untenable. Man can make endless ethical and spiritual progress in life and at the same time remain untethered to karma. The Lord now provides the means to it as follows :—

**The Greatness of Yajna — 9-13**

**यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।**
**तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ ९**

यज्ञ-अर्थात् कर्मणः अन्यत्र लोकः अयम् कर्म-बन्धनः ।
तद्-अर्थम् कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्त-सङ्गः सम्-आ-चर ॥

*yajñārthāt karmano 'nyatra*
*loko 'yam karmabandhanah* ।
*tad artham karma kaunteya*
*mukta sangaḥ samācara* ॥

यज्ञार्थात् *yajñārthāt* for the sake of sacrifice कर्मणः *karmaṇaḥ* of action अन्यत्र *anyatra* otherwise लोकः *lokaḥ* the world अयम् *ayaṁ* this कर्मबन्धनः *karma bandhanaḥ*

affluence. Whatever he wants to offer to others comes to him easily. His bounteous mind is the real *Kāmadhenu*. Because of this frame of mind he is ever in prosperity. *Preyas* and *Sreyas* do both pay homage to him. This is the plan and purpose of the Cosmos.

What is the practical shape that can be given to the spirit of *Yajna?* The answer comes :—

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११

देवान् भावयत अनेन ते देवाः भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्-परम् भावयन्तः श्रेयः परम् अव-आप्-स्यथ ॥

*devān bhāvayatā 'nena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ* ।
*parasparaṁ bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ param avāpsyatha.* ॥

देवान् *devān* the gods भावयत *bhāvayata* nourish (ye) अनेन *anena* with this ते *te* those देवाः *devāḥ* gods भावयन्तु *bhāvayantu* may nourish वः *vaḥ* you परस्परम् *parasparaṁ* one another भावयन्तः *bhāvayantaḥ* nourishing श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* good परम् *paraṁ* the highest अवाप्स्यथ *avāpsyatha* shall attain

**Cherish the Devas with this; and may those Devas cherish you; thus cherishing one another, you shall reap the supreme good. 11**

Etymologically the word *deva* means the one that is shining. In the human frame the senses are called *devas*. They are shining in their own way and they bring light to the dweller in the body. If food be not supplied to the body, the senses become weak and unable to function. If the senses be abused then also they get worn out. But when they are

Self-dedication is the highest law of life It prevails at the ethical and spiritual planes It is given to the enlightened man alone to practise self-dedication The act of offering the best and the most useful in one for the welfare of the others is self-dedication Both the giver and the receiver stand to gain through this sacred act It is like draining the water away from a copious well into a fertile field This bounteous act goes by the name of *Yajna* which literally means sacrifice As fresh water springs out from an emptied well, the man who performs *Yajna* becomes more and yet more enlightened and prosperous By imparting one's learning to others the capacity to teach increases By sharing one's knowledge and wisdom with the others one's fund of knowledge and wisdom increases By supplying manure to the soil its capacity to yield is made more potential By giving the labourer his due wage the urge in him to turn out more work is made keen By sharing one's wealth with all those who have been responsible for its growth, security and further expansion are ensured The personal weal is ever unfailingly contained in the public weal Giving effect to this inviolable law of nature is the practice of *Yajna*

Meritorious act untainted by selfishness, disinterested service, work of any kind performed for general welfare, adoration of the Almighty, ethical and spiritual endeavours — all these salutary activities are contained in *Yajna*

Dedicating oneself exclusively to spiritual life amounts to the performance of *Yajna* Waging a

इष्टान् भोगान् हि वः देवाः दा-स्यन्ते यज्ञ-भाविताः ।
तैः दत्तान् अ-प्र-दाय एभ्यः यः भुङ्क्ते स्तेनः एव सः ॥

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajñabhāvitāḥ* ।
*tair dattān apradāyai 'bhyo yo bhuṅkte stena eva saḥ* ॥

इष्टान् *iṣṭān* desired भोगान् *bhogān* objects हि *hi* so वः *vaḥ* to you देवाः *devāḥ* the gods दास्यन्ते *dāsyante* will give यज्ञभाविताः *yajñabhāvitāḥ* nourished by sacrifice तैः *taiḥ* by them दत्तान् *dattān* given अप्रदाय *apradāya* without offering. एभ्यः *ebhyaḥ* to them यः *yaḥ* who भुङ्क्ते *bhuṅkte* enjoys स्तेनः *stenaḥ* thief एव *eva* verily सः *saḥ* he

**"Cherished by Yajna, the Devas shall bestow on you the enjoyments you desire." A thief verily is he who enjoys what is given by them without returning them anything. 12**

This world abounds in facilities and amenities that have come about as a result of the sacrifices of several people. The new born baby is nursed and brought up. That is "sacrifice" of the parents. The youth receives education. It comes from sacrifice made by the builders of educational institutions. The food that man consumes, the house that he lives in, the clothing that he wears, the means of transport that is available to him—all these are the outcome of sacrifices made by other people. While availing himself of all these advantages, man ought to ask himself as to how his own life is going to be useful to the others. As are one's sacrifices so are the blessings that emanate from them. Whatever man does must be more beneficial to others than to himself. His doings become *Yajna* in proportion to their public

*astu* let be इष्टकामधुक् *ista kāma dhuk* milch cow of desires

**Having created mankind in the beginning together with Yajna, the Prajapati said: "By this shall you propagate; this shall be the milch cow of your desires."**

The creative force of nature is an aspect of Iswara *Manifesting Himself in this aspect He* governs and guides human destiny Then He is known as Prajapati

Life on earth is wrought with misery, however much man may pose to be free from it Still, there is an unfailing way to convert earthly life into a 'mansion of mirth' When all activities in life are changed into *Yajna*, the spectacle also undergoes a corresponding change Man is born to give and not to grab The grabbing man pays the penalty in the form of misery, the giver reaps the reward in the form of undiluted joy The means to give somehow increases in the man who has a mind to give The resources, the bodily effort and the mental disposition — all these become multiplied in the man of *Yajna* His life flowers in being useful to others and fruits in enlightenment

*Kāmadhuk* is also called *Kāmadhenu* It is a mythological milch cow, having a woman's head, a cow's body and a bird's wings The usefulness of the human, the beast and the bird are all combined in it The owner of this divine cow is believed to have all his wants immediately supplied Allegorically this milch cow is nothing other than *Yajna* The doer of *Yajna* is never in wants, he is always in

a selfish end may not be a sin; but it is not so meritorious as a prayer offered for common weal. An aotion becomes sacred to the extent the ego gets obliterated. All thought, word and deed require to be directed to the glory of the Lord and the good of the world.

Partaking of food is an obligatory work. Cooking the daily food has therefore to go on as a matter of course. But one ought to think of and provide for the hungry and the needy as much as for oneself. He who is exclusive and self-centred in the procurement of food and in the partaking of it, is a sinful man. What he eats is nothing but sin. The bondage of sin that he creates for himself is boundless.

The king Yudhishthira performed a great *RajasuyaYajna* when he ascended the throne after the great war was over. The learned and the wise unanimously praised that *Yajna* as unparalleled. A mongoose having one side of its body turned golden, entered the sacrificial hall, rolled on the ground and pronounced the extollers as liars. But the assembled great men pleaded that they only spoke out their considered opinion and that they did not lie. The half-golden creature then explained itself:- "A few years back a terrible famine raged in a particular province causing death to people in large numbers. A pious teacher, his wife, son and daughter-in-law lived a humble but dutiful life in that region. In the midst of privation the teaching went on regularly. When life was somehow lingering in that family, a scanty offering of flour was made to it by a devoted disciple. The famished four baked four pieces of bread with that flour, offered them to the Lord and sat to partake of the sanctified food, when there was a knock at the door. The family felt itself blessed because the deity of a guest had arrived just in time when they had the semblance of a meal to offer. All the four fading souls reverently parted with their little shares, intent on appeasing the increasing hunger of the new comer. He blessed them heartily for their hospitality and went his way. But the whole family perished

properly cherished they become useful to bring knowledge and efficiency to man. To the extent man gets enlightened he looks after the senses with added wisdom and attention. Mutual fostering takes place this way causing good to both. Life becomes enriched thereby.

Highly evolved souls are called *Devas* wherever they happen to be. Cosmic forces are also called *Devas* because of their efficient functioning. The characteristic of the good and the enlightened is that they are always engaged in the welfare of all. It is *Yajna* to aid them in their noble and auspicious endeavours. The good and the noble in the world spontaneously come forward to serve the doers of good and to promote their noble causes. Those who sacrifice themselves completely to God get their reward accordingly. As the fuel that gives itself away to fire becomes fire in its turn, the devotees who surrender their everything to the Lord, become all Divinity. By sacrificing his all to God, man attains Godhood. This is the supreme good that *Yajna* brings.

Whatever you offer to the Lord is returned to you, magnified manifold. Take care, therefore, that you do not offer anything bad to him.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What becomes of him who makes no sacrifice but appropriates everything to himself? Here is the answer:—

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥ १२

*Pitru Yajna* comes third in rank. It has its two aspects. The living parents have to be revered and devotedly served every day. He who pleases not his parents cannot please anybody here or hereafter. This is the first part of this *Yajna.* Thinking daily holy and auspicious thoughts for the welfare of the departed ancestors is its second part.

Fourthly comes *Nara Yajna*—the devoted service rendered to mankind. Individuals are the limbs of the community. At all levels and in all fields the interest of the limb should be subordinated to that of the main body. Any position reverse to this is definitely harmful. That man who places the public interest above the personal and acts accordingly is doing *Nara Yajna.* This age is in need of emphasis on this *Yajna.*

*Bhuta Yajna* or a reverent relationship with all the living beings completes the list. Since all creatures have come from God, the Cosmic Life, they have to be treated with due regard. The domestic animals and birds require to be tended on a par with the human. The cow-mother — *Gomata* is literally worshipped in this great land. *Bhuta Yajna* does not, however, preclude stern steps being taken against terrific and venomous creatures that prove a menace to human life.

It is God Himself who has become the entire Creation. All beings are therefore to be revered as the various manifestations of Narayana. The tiger-Narayana, however, has to be respected from a safe distance. — Sri Ramakrishna

Through the meticulous practice of these five great sacrifices—*Pancha maha yajna* the life of man

utility. When a balance is struck between receipts and gifts, a righteous man is he who gives more than he receives Indebted is that man who appropriates more than he gifts A thief is he who grabs everything and sacrifices nothing This seemingly prosperous man ends his career as a non-entity The enlightened do not place themselves in that pitiable position

What is it that befits a noble life? What other thing is it that does not befit a noble life? The answer comes —

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३

यज्ञ शिष्ट-अशिन सन्त मुच्यन्ते सर्व-किल्बिषै ।
भुञ्जते त तु अघम् पापा॰ ये पचन्ति आत्म-कारणात् ॥

*yajñaśiṣṭāśinah santo mucyante sarva kilbisaiḥ* ।
*bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā ye pacanty ātmakāranāt* ॥

यज्ञशिष्टाशिन *yajñaśiṣṭāśinaḥ* who eat the remnants of the sacrifice सन्त *santaḥ* the righteous मुच्यन्ते *mucyante* are freed सर्वकिल्बिषै *sarva kilbisaiḥ* from all sins भुञ्जते *bhuñjate* eat ते *te* those तु *tu* indeed अघम् *agham* sin पापा *pāpāḥ* sinful ones ये *ye* who पचन्ति *pacanti* cook आत्मकारणात् *ātmakāranāt* for their own sake

**The good who eat the remains of Yajna are freed from all sins; but the sinful ones who cook food only for themselves, they verily eat sin. 13**

Karma in itself is neither good nor evil. The motif behind it makes it good or evil A deadly war waged with the object of exterminating the wicked is a virtuous act A pious prayer to the Almighty for

assimilated by their leaves. Similarly man's *Yajna* changes into mental force which alone in reality is *apūrva*. The syllables chanted in *Yajna* do not themselves become *mantras* or mental forces. It is the thought or the feeling that really constitutes the mental force — *mantra*. The purer the man and his motive, the stronger is the mental force. It is the intensity of the force of mind that becomes *apūrva*. Influenced and regulated by it the rainfall occurs to people on earth. The production of grains for food depends on the availability of water caused by rain. That beings thrive on food, is self-evident.

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५

कर्म ब्रह्म-उद्-भवम् विद्धि ब्रह्म अ-क्षर-सम्-उद्-भवम् ।
तस्मात् सर्व-गतम् ब्रह्म नित्यम् यज्ञे प्रति-स्थितम् ॥

*karma brahmodbhavaṁ viddhi*
*brahmā 'kṣarasamudbhavam* ।
*tasmāt sarvagataṁ brahma*
*nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam* ॥

कर्म *karma* action ब्रह्मोद्भवम् *brahmodbhavaṁ* arisen from Brahma विद्धि *viddhi* know ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahma अक्षरसमुद्भवम् *akṣarasamudbhavaṁ* arisen from the Imperishable तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore सर्वगतम् *sarvagataṁ* all pervading ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahma नित्यम् *nityaṁ* ever यज्ञे *yajñe* in sacrifice प्रतिष्ठितम् *pratiṣṭhitaṁ* (is) established

**Know karma to have risen from the Veda, and the Veda from the Imperishable. The all-pervading Veda is, therefore, ever centred in Yajna. 15**

of hunger Just then I entered their hut and rolled myself on the floor The remnants of the flour there came in contact with a half of my body and turned it golden as you all see It was so because of the purity of the motive and of the intensity of the spirit of self sacrifice in their act of cooking and serving the guest Since then I am on the look out for another *Yajna* of that type that would turn the remaining half of my body golden What the King Yudhishthira is doing here is no great *Yajna* as it has not brought any change whatsoever on my body ' The assembly meekly submitted to the view of the strange mongoose

— Mahabharata

A day passed bereft of the performance of *Yajna* is a day gone to waste Such is the injunction enjoined in the scriptures An ideal family man is he who engages himself daily in the five great *Yajnas* All the five of them form his *nitya* karma—obligatory work

First and foremost among them is *Deva Yajna*—the worship of God The day invariably begins with it This has to be gone through devoutly and to the best of one's knowledge It may be augmented with rituals according to traditions and individual tastes

The second in order is *Rishi Yajna* — the adoration of the Enlightened The great ones who have had God-realization have not allowed their rare experiences to go into oblivion Out of compassion for the ignorant humanity they have passed them on to posterity in the form of scriptures and sacred books A devoted study, assimilation and practice of the principles contained in them constitute this *Yajna* Expounding the holy scriptures with a devotional attitude to the ardent enquirers and devotees is also an aspect of this *Yajna*.

एवम् *evaṁ* thus प्रवर्तितम् *pravartitaṁ* set revolving चक्रम् *cakraṁ* wheel न *na* not अनुवर्तयति *anuvartayati* follows इह *iha* here यः *yaḥ* who अघायुः *aghāyuḥ* living in sin इन्द्रियारामः *indriyārāmaḥ* rejoicing in the senses मोघम् *moghaṁ* in vain पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सः *saḥ* he जीवति *jīvati* lives

**He who does not follow on earth the wheel thus revolving, sinful of life and rejoicing in the senses, he, O Partha, lives in vain. 16**

Factories are set up for curing, treating and processing the various things. The wheel of Nature is likewise set up by the Lord for nursing, training, disciplining and elevating all beings at varying levels of existence. A pupil who declines to be educated does not derive the benefit of his being schooled. A visit to a town is as bad as no visit if the visitor fails to see or do anything there. Having come into this world if man does not do what is expected of him, his advent amounts to nothing. As a drone he drags on a wretched existence. He is no asset but a burden and dead weight to society. Instead of fulfilling, he frustrates the divine plan and purpose of Nature. Man ought to be a fulfilment and not a failure in life.

Is there nobody who is an exception to the wheel of action revolving to progression? The answer comes:—

Atman is Beyond Action — 17-18

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७

on earth becomes prosperous and auspicious. Again, all the activities in life can be converted into *Yajna* by the knowing ones. The how of it is being explained now :—

**The Wheel of Life — 14-16**

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ १४

अन्नात् भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यात् अन्न-सम्-भव: ।
यज्ञात् भवति पर्जन्य: यज्ञ: कर्म-सम्-उद्-भव: ॥

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyād annasaṁbhavaḥ* ।
*yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñaḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ* ॥

अन्नात् *annāt* from food भवन्ति *bhavanti* come forth भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings पर्जन्यात् *parjanyāt* from rain अन्नसंभव: *annasaṁbhavaḥ* production of food यज्ञात् *yajñāt* from sacrifice भवति *bhavati* arises पर्जन्य: *parjanyaḥ* rain यज्ञ: *yajñaḥ* sacrifice कर्मसमुद्भव: *karmasamudbhavaḥ* born of action

**From food beings become; from rain is food produced; from Yajna rain proceeds; Yajna is born of karma. 14**

Work performed with the right frame of mind gets converted into *Yajna*. The effect of that work assumes a subtle force which in the Vedic parlance is known as *apūrva*. This point can be clarified through two concrete examples. The sun converts the sea water into the invisible vapour which is equivalent to *apūrva*. In its turn the vapour becomes rain. The rubbish consigned to fire changes itself into the invisible carbon dioxide. It is *apūrva* in this state. It then forms food to the plants

All beings are tending towards this goal consciously or unconsciously. To the mind merged in Atman, there is no duty.

The minute hand and the hour hand in a clock are interrelated. Though they appear separate, they get united also hourly. The *Jivatman* and the Paramatman seem separate. In time they get united.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Does not the man established in the Self seek anything from society ? The answer comes :—

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ १८

न एव तस्य कृतेन अर्थः न अ-कृतेन इह कः-चन ।
न च अस्य सर्व-भूतेषु कः-चित् अर्थ-वि-अप-आ-श्रयः ॥

*nai 'va tasya kṛtenā 'rtho nā 'kṛtene 'ha kaścana* ।
*na cā 'sya sarvabhūteṣu kaścid arthavyapāśrayaḥ* ॥

न *na* not एव *eva* even तस्य *tasya* of him कृतेन *kṛtena* by action अर्थः *arthaḥ* concern न *na* not अकृतेन *akṛtena* by actions not done इह *iha* here कश्चन *kaścana* any न *na* not च *ca* and अस्य *asya* of this man सर्वभूतेषु *sarvabhūteṣu* in all beings कश्चित् *kaścit* any अर्थव्यपाश्रयः *arthavyapāśrayaḥ* depending for any object

**For him there is in this world no object to acquire by doing an action; nor is there any loss by not doing an action; nor has he to depend on anybody for anything. 18**

In sound sleep man is self-sufficient. He has nothing to seek from any entity. But it is a negative state based on nescience. It is temporary. The spiritually enlightened man, on the other hand,

The phenomenon-*jagat* constituted of the three Gunas is known as Brahma or as Veda. It is also constituted of time, space and causation. This manifested universe expands into infinitude. It is therefore designated as all-pervading. Having come out of Brahman the Supercosmic Intelligence, this cosmos itself beams with intelligence. For this reason it is styled as Veda. This phenomenon is again in a constant state of flux. As such, karma and the cosmos are equated. When karma is performed perfectly and *with the best of motives it becomes Yajna.* Eating for example may be done as an act of glorifying the Divinity enshrined in one. Living itself is turned into *Yajna* when directed to the service of the Divine. An earthly government becomes ideal when all people are law abiding. On a higher level still, when people take to the performance of *Yajna*, the functioning of the universe itself becomes elevated and sublime. The universe is therefore stated to be ever centred in *Yajna.* It is possible for man to convert the earth into heaven. And sacrifice is the sure means to it. The scheme of Nature is verily centred on *Yajna.*

Does any harm accrue to man if he does not engage himself in *Yajna?* The answer comes.—

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६

एवम् प्र-वर्तितम् चक्रम् न अनु-वर्तयति इह यः ।
अघ-आयुः इन्द्रिय-आ-रामः मोघम् पार्थ सः जीवति ॥

*evaṁ pravartitaṁ cakraṁ nā 'nuvartayatī 'ha yaḥ* ।
*aghāyur indriyārāmo moghaṁ pārtha sa jīvati* ॥

Because of the incessant beating of the heart, bodily existence goes on effectively. But man gives no thought whatsoever to the beating of the heart. Several other essential activities have to be carried on in similar ways, free from attachment. Absence of attachment leads to the pacification of the mind. Work and rest go on side by side. Mind made calm this way becomes capable of grasping the Self. Calmness of mind is not for him who neglects duty. Calmness is a prerequisite for Self-knowledge.

How are we to reconcile the worldly entanglements and engagements with spiritual detachment? See how the carpenter's housewife busies herself with all and sundry. With one hand she pushes the paddy to be pounded in the mortar; with the other hand she embraces and suckles her baby. At the same time she bargains with a customer for the flattened rice. In the midst of all of these activities her mind is on the hand pushing the paddy lest the pestle should hurt it. Likewise do your worldly activities; but in the midst of them keep the mind fixed on the Lord. Deviate not on any account from Godly path.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Have there ever been people who, in the midst of the taxing earthly activities, were absorbed in the Self? The answer comes :—

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २०

कर्मणा एव हि सम्-सिध्-तिम् आ-स्थिताः जनक-आदयः ।
लोक संग्रहम् एव अपि सम्-पश्यन् कर्तुम् अर्हसि ॥

*karmanai 'va hi saṁsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ* ।
*lokasaṁgraham evā 'pi sampaśyan kartum arhasi* ॥

कर्मणा *karmaṇā* by action एव *eva* only हि *hi* verily संसिद्धिम् *saṁsiddhim* perfection आस्थिताः *āsthitāḥ* attain-

यः तु आत्म-रतिः एव स्यात् आत्म-तृप्तः च मानवः ।
आत्मनि एव च सम्-तुष्टः तस्य कार्यम् न विद्यते ॥

*yas tv ātmaratir eva syād ātmatṛptaś ca mānavaḥ* ।
*ātmany eva ca saṁtuṣṭas tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate* ॥

यः *yaḥ* who तु *tu* but आत्मरतिः *ātmaratiḥ* rejoices in the Self एव *eva* only स्यात् *syāt* may be आत्मतृप्तः *ātmatṛptaḥ* satisfied in the Self च *ca* and मानवः *mānavaḥ* the man आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self एव *eva* only च *ca* and संतुष्टः *saṁtuṣṭah* contented तस्य *tasya* his कार्यम् *kāryaṁ* work to be done न *na* not विद्यते *vidyate* is

**But the man who rejoices in the Self, is satisfied with the Self, and is centred in the Self, for him verily there is no obligatory duty. 17**

*Prakriti* or Nature is constituted of karma. But there is no karma whatsoever in Atman. Actionlessness and Atman are one and the same. Mind is in fact a phase of *Prakriti.* Karma is therefore going on constantly in it. But there is a speciality in the functioning of the mind. When it impinges on the external world with the aid of the senses or even without their aid, its activities are on the increase. But when it revolves back on the Self or Atman, its activities automatically diminish. The last of all of its activities is to get established in Atman. The river is active until it reaches the ocean. On merging in it, its functioning is over. Likewise the functioning of the mind is over in its being resolved in Atman. Bliss is the characteristic of Atman. That mind which is set in the Self is therefore ever satisfied, pacified and blissful. The finale of all activities is for the mind to rest in Atman.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१

यत् यत् आ-चरति श्रेष्ठः तत् तत् एव इतरः जनः ।
सः यत् प्रमाणम् कुरुते लोकः तत् अनु-वर्तते ॥

*yad-yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat-tad eve'taro janaḥ* ।
*sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate* ॥

यद्यत् *yad-yat* whatsoever आचरति *ācarati* does श्रेष्ठः *śreṣṭhaḥ* the best तत्तत् *tat-tat* that एव *eva* only इतरः *itaraḥ* the other जनः *janaḥ* people सः *saḥ* he यत् *yat* what प्रमाणम् *pramāṇaṁ* standard कुरुते *kurute* does लोकः *lokaḥ* the world तत् *tat* that अनुवर्तते *anuvartate* follows

**Whatever a great man does is followed by others; people go by the example he sets up. 21**

Being eminent with virtues is a rare gift which comes from God. In one so imbued godly qualities are in evidence. Such a man is viewed a model to society. The world feels inclined to walk in his way. His responsibility is therefore very great. Man is to society what a limb is to the body. As the action of a limb affects the body, the action of a man affects the society. In public interest a person of eminence has therefore to put forth his best. Slighting or allowing godly gifts go to waste, amounts to slighting God Himself.

A person took his ailing son to a physician for medical consultation. The man asked him to bring the boy again on the following day. After posing to examine the patient for a while the healer advised the father against giving sweets to the sickly boy. "This could have been mentioned at the very first visit instead of making me walk twice carrying the boy," complained

enjoys infinite beatitude. Naught else is there for him to obtain. This *Brahmāvasta* is never again lost. The *Brahma-jnani* therefore has nothing to seek from man or God.

One of the signs of the enlightened man is that he is enjoying boundless bliss within himself The surface of the ocean seems boisterous, but at the bottom it is all calmness Even such is the state of affair of the *Jnani*.

— Sri Ramakrishna

By mere affectation this supreme state cannot be reached. One has to make oneself competent for it by diligent preparation. Karma yoga is the means for it. How shall one do action? The answer comes :—

**What the Spiritual Aspirant ought to do — 19-26**

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥ १९

तस्मात् अ-सक्त सततम् कार्यम् कर्म सम्-आ-चर ।
अ-सक्तः हि आ-चरन् कर्म परम् आप्-नोति पूरुष ॥

*tasmād asaktah satatam kāryam karma samācara* ।
*asakto hy ācaran karma param āpnoti pūrusah* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore असक्त *asaktah* without attachment सततम् *satatam* always कार्यम् *kāryam* which should be done कर्म *karma* action समाचर *samācara* perform असक्तः *asaktah* without attachment हि *hi* because आचरन् *ācaran* performing कर्म *karma* action परम् *param* the Supreme आप्नोति *āpnoti* attains पूरुषः *pūrusah* man

**Therefore, constantly perform your obligatory duty without attachment; for, by doing duty without attachment man verily obtains the Supreme. 19**

far more than those of all the other characters put together. And why did he do so? He gives the answer :—

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ २३

यदि हि अहम् न वर्तेयम् जातु कर्मणि अ-तन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्म अनु-वर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्व-शः ॥

*yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyaṁ jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ* ।
*mama vartmā 'nuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ* ॥

यदि *yadi* if हि *hi* surely अहम् *ahaṁ* I न *na* not वर्तेयम् *varteyaṁ* engage in action जातु *jātu* ever कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in action अतन्द्रितः *atandritaḥ* unwearied मम *mama* my वर्त्म *vartma* path अनुवर्तन्ते *anuvartante* follow मनुष्याः *manuṣyāḥ* men पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* in every way

**If ever I did not engage in work relentless, O Partha, men would in every respect follow My path.**

Staunch adherence to good and devotion to duty are the characteristics of the great. But the ordinary people in society do not usually feel inclined to emulate the merits in the eminent. If there be any lapses in them such as idleness, procrastination and indifference to duty, these are readily caught by the ordinary. They even cite these shortcomings in the great as precedents. Sri Krishna is therefore exemplary in His conduct. In all of His doings He is a model to mankind.

Is there any harm if perchance the Lord ever deviated from dharma ? Here is the answer :—

ed जनकादयः *janakādayah* Janaka and others लोकसंग्रहम् *lokasamgraham* protection of the people एव अपि *eva api* only सम्पश्यन् *sampaśyan* having in view कर्तुम् *kartum* to perform अर्हसि *arhasi* thou shouldst

**Janaka and others indeed achieved perfection by action; having an eye to the guidance of men also you should perform action. 20**

Raja-rishis such as Janaka and Asvapati were engaged in the active and efficient administration of their kingdoms Incidentally they took part in several other activities conducive to people's welfare But their aim in life was more than that They diligently applied themselves to Self-knowledge and got it

There is an additional advantage in the spiritually enlightened taking to altruistic work The ignorant cannot guide society any more than the blind lead the blind But the enlightened are the best servants of society The nature of karma is also very well known to them Efficient work on right lines can be turned out by them Following in their wake, ordinary men set themselves to their duties in all earnestness Taking this important factor into account, the elite should ever engage themselves in the discharge of their dharma to the best of their ability

The world goes its way waiting for guidance from nobody A pertinent question may therefore be put whether concern for the world is not a self-created problem This doubt is hereby met —

the virtuous and the vicious. This levelling down would mean confusion of species.

Through the meticulous performance of one's dharma one's attainments get exemplified. The level of one's evolution becomes self-evident through the discharge of one's duty. Where karma is kept in abeyance, the distinctions get lost. If Iswara, the Cosmic Intelligence does not induce His beings in their respective functions confusion of species is bound to take place, leading to cosmic calamity.

Does not drudging in karma indicate that all beings are prosaically harnessed to action? No, it is not so. Distinctions reveal themselves as follows:—

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥ २५

सक्ताः कर्मणि अ-विद्वांसः यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्यात् विद्-वान् तथा अ-सक्तः चिकीर्षुः लोक-सम्-ग्रहम् ॥

*saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso yathā kurvanti bhārata ।*
*kuryād vidvāṁs tathā 'saktaś cikīrṣur lokasaṁgraham* ॥

सक्ताः *saktāḥ* attached कर्मणि *karmaṇi* to action अविद्वांसः *avidvāṁsaḥ* the ignorant यथा *yathā* as कुर्वन्ति *kurvanti* act भारत *bhārata* O Bharata कुर्यात् *kuryāt* should act विद्वान् *vidvān* the wise तथा *tathā* so असक्तः *asaktaḥ* unattached चिकीर्षुः *cikīrṣuḥ* wishing लोकसंग्रहम् *lokasaṁgraham* the welfare of the world

**As the unenlightened act from attachment to action, O Bharata, so should the enlightened act without attachment, desirous of the guidance of the multitude.** 25

the parent The doctor explained, "But then, my man, there was kept here yesterday a plate of candy My advice might have been mistaken by your son for selfishness" The responsibility of those who guide the society is very great

— Sri Ramakrishna

How then about the responsibility of the Lord Himself? The answer follows —

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ २२

न मे पार्थ अस्-ति कर्तव्यम् त्रिषु लोकेषु किम्-चन ।
न अन्-अव आप्-तम् अव-आप्-तव्यम् वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

*na me pārthā 'sti kartavyam trisu lokesu kimcana* ।
*nā 'navāptam avāptavyam varta eva ca karmani* ॥

न *na* not मे *me* my पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha अस्ति *asti* is कर्तव्यम् *kartavyam* to be done (duty) त्रिषु *trisu* in the three लोकेषु *lokesu* worlds किंचन *kimcana* anything न *na* not अनवाप्तम् *anavāptam* unattained अवाप्तव्यम् *avāptavyam* to be attained वर्ते *varte* am एव *eva* also च *ca* and कर्मणि *karmani* in action

**There is nought in the three worlds, O Partha, that has not been done by Me, nor anything unattained that might be attained; still I engage in action. 22**

Iswara or the Saguna Brahmam is immanent in the universe Because of His proximity there are orderliness and precision in all the happenings in the cosmos These happenings, however, are all impersonal Incessant activities are evident even in His Incarnations as Rama, Krishna and others Sri Krishna had nothing to gain or lose in the Mahabharata warfare Still the part He played in it was

wants to avoid exertion on one plea or another. To work for results is far superior to being given to laziness born of inertia. The indolent man must be roused to ambitions and exertions leading to pleasures and prosperity. Teaching disinterested service to him will unsettle his understanding. Then there is the man who suffers from philosophical indigestion. He is given to an escape-mentality from actions on the ground that they are all wrought with pain and evil. His creed is to pose quietism which is a pitfall in Vedanta. Care should be taken that no confusion is created in the minds of the indolent and the ignorant. Himself active, the enlightened man should induce all to intense activity.

What is the cause of attachment which is so deep-rooted in the common man? It is analysed as follows :—

**How to Root out the Ego — 27-32**

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ २७

प्र-कृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्व-शः ।
अहम्-कार-वि-मूढ-आत्मा कर्ता अहम् इति मन्-यते ॥

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ* ।
*ahaṁkāra vimūḍhātmā kartā 'ham iti manyate* ॥

प्रकृतेः *prakṛteḥ* of nature क्रियमाणानि *kriyamāṇāni* are performed गुणैः *guṇaiḥ* by the qualities कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* in all cases अहंकारविमूढात्मा *ahaṁkāra vimūḍhātmā* one whose mind is deluded by egoism कर्ता *kartā* doer अहम् *ahaṁ* I इति *iti* thus मन्यते *manyate* thinks

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥ २४

उद् सीदेयु इमे लोका न कुर्याम् कर्म चेन् अहम् ।
सम्-करस्य च कर्ता स्याम् उप-हन् याम् इमा प्रजा ॥

*utsıdeyur ıme lokā na kuryām karma ced aham* ।
*samkarasya ca kartā syām upahanyām ımāḥ prajāḥ* ॥

उत्सीदेयु *utsıdeyuḥ* would perish इमे *ıme* these लोका *lokāḥ* worlds न *na* not कुर्याम् *kuryām* would do कर्म *karma* action चेत् *cet* if अहम् *aham* I सकरस्य *samkarasya* of confusion of castes च *ca* and कर्ता *kartā* author स्याम् *syām* would be उपहन्याम् *upahanyām* would destroy इमा. *imāḥ* these प्रजा *prajāh* beings

**These worlds would perish if I did not do action; I should be the cause of confusion of species and I should destroy these beings.** 24

The potentiality of a seed is known only when it sprouts and grows The worth of a man is known only through his actions.

To be devoid of function is equivalent to be dead The difference between the two is very little. The body of the dead disappears while that of the functionless drags on a wretched existence, proving itself a burden to society.

Fostering the body is common to high and low. The difference, therefore, between the two cannot be known merely from bodily existence For, if life got confined to the physical level only, there would be no difference between the refined and the crude, between the enlightened and the ignorant, between

तत्त्ववित् *tattvavit* the knower of truth तु *tu* but महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed गुणकर्मविभागयोः *guṇa karma vibhāgayoḥ* of the divisions of qualities and functions गुणाः *guṇāḥ* the qualities (in the shape of senses) गुणेषु *guṇeṣu* amidst the qualities (in the shape of objects) वर्तन्ते *vartante* remain इति *iti* thus मत्वा *matvā* knowing न *na* not सज्जते *sajjate* is attached

**But, O mighty-armed, the one intuitive into the nature of Guna and karma knows that Gunas as senses merely abide with Gunas as objects, and does not become entangled. 28**

There is a kinship between the senses and their respective objects. They are both constituted of the same elements and of the same Gunas. The element fire for example has its own combination of Gunas. Emitting light is characteristic of fire. The combination of Gunas in fire takes one form as the sense of sight and another form as the object of sight. Because of the sameness of nature in both of them, sense experience becomes possible. And this is the fact in regard to all the five senses. Atman which is consciousness, remains unaffected by the sensations, even as Akasa is substratum to the dashing clouds. The sage who realizes this truth is free from entanglement.

What is the attitude of the enlightened towards the ignorant? It is explained :—

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।
तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥ २९

Difference between man and man is in the sort of desire harboured at heart. The enlightened one is desireless Desire for the fruits of actions goads the multitude to activity The enlightened man has no personal motive Out of compassion for the ignorant he ceaselessly works Following his example the others do their work

Has the enlightened man anything to guard himself against? The answer comes —

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥ २६

न बुद्धि-भेदम् जनयेत् अ-ज्ञानाम् कर्म-सङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत् सर्व-कर्माणि विद्-वान् युक्त सम् आ-चरन् ॥

*na buddhi bhedam janayed ajñānām karma sanginām* ।
*joṣayet sarva karmāṇi vidvān yuktah samācaran* ॥

न *na* not बुद्धिभेदम् *buddhi bhedam* unsettlement in the minds जनयेत् *janayet* should produce अज्ञानाम् *ajñānām* of the ignorant कर्मसङ्गिनाम् *karma sanginām* of the persons attached to actions जोषयेत् *josayet* should engage सर्व कर्माणि *sarva karmāni* all actions विद्वान् *vidvān* the wise युक्त *yuktah* balanced समाचरन् *samācaran* performing

**Let not the wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to karma. By doing persistently and precisely let the wise induce the others in all activities. 26**

Doing duty for duty's sake devoid of desire, is an exalted state given to the enlightened only. This philosophy of action is too high for the common man to understand. He either works for results or

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि सं-नि-अस्-य अधि-आत्म-चेतसा ।
निर्-आसीः निर्-ममः भू-त्वा युध्-यस्व वि-गत-ज्वरः ॥

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi saṁnyasyā 'dhyātmacetasā |*
*nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā yudhyasva vigatajvaraḥ ||*

मयि *mayi* in me सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* all कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions संन्यस्य *saṁnyasya* renouncing अध्यात्मचेतसा *adhyātmacetasā* with the mind centred on the Self निराशीः *nirāśīḥ* free from hope निर्ममः *nir mamaḥ* free from ownership भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having become युध्यस्व *yudhyasva* fight (thou) विगतज्वरः *vigatajvaraḥ* free from (mental) fever

**Surrendering all actions to Me, with your thoughts resting on Self, freed from hope and selfishness and cured of mental fever, engage in battle. 30**

The more one attunes one's mind to truth, the more one gains in equilibrium. The truth is, the Lord is the invisible propeller of all actions in the universe. He is the true owner of everything sentient and insentient. Man's prerogative is to know this truth and adjust his life activities accordingly. His mental fever gets pacified in that way. Further, efficiency in the execution of duty increases in him.

Iswara, the Lord of the universe smiles on two derisory occasions. When the son is sinking on his death bed, the doctor assures the desponding mother, "Don't be afraid; I'm here to save your son." This is the first occasion on which God is moved to smile. Two brothers survey and share a land saying, "That portion is yours and this mine." This is the second occasion on which the Lord smiles. —Sri Ramakrishna

There are aspirants who do not understand that the real doer and owner of everything is Iswara; how about them? The statement comes :—

**The Gunas of Prakriti perform all karma. With the understanding clouded by egoism, man thinks, "I am the doer."** **27**

Karma is inherent in Nature which is constituted of the three Gunas — *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* But there is no karma whatsoever in Atman The ignorant man is incapable of distinguishing between the action-ridden Nature and the actionless Self

It is egoism to identify the Self with the non-Self Two trains stand side by side in a railway station A passenger in one train fixes his gaze on the other When the other train moves the man fancies that his own vehicle moves Likewise the mobility of *Prakriti* is imposed on the immobile Atman Egoism is brought about by mistaking *Prakriti* for Atman Bondage persists as long as egoism lasts The egoistic man thinks of himself as the doer while actually he is not Egoism and agency are the outcome of ignorance

When an onion is peeled continually all skin goes away and no substance is left Similarly on analysing the ego it is found to be no entity

— Sri Ramakrishna

Then how about the enlightened man? The elucidation comes —

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥ २८

तत्त्व-विद् तु महा-बाहो गुण-कर्म वि-भागयोः ।
गुणाः गुणेषु वर्तन्ते इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥

*tattvavit tu mahābāho gunakarma vibhāgayoh* |
*gunā guṇeṣu vartanta iti matvā na sajjate* ||

Earnestly digesting the understandable portions in the Bhagavad Gita and hoping that the abstruse portions will soon become lucid — this is placing *sraddha* in this great book.

It is cavilling if one becomes intolerant of others obtaining what is not obtained by oneself. Merits in one, if any, get melted away if one is given to cavilling. Conversely, advancement is ensured for one who delights in the prosperity of others.

Haughty people there are who deride the ignorance, credulity and superstition in others. They are proud of their own attainments. Such people hardly ever make any progress in spirituality. On the other hand, the humble and the meek who are ever dependent on the Lord, get over their defects, if any, very soon. The gracious Lord sees to it that His erring devotees come round soon.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What becomes of the callous and the impious? Their position is explained :—

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२

ये तु एतत् अभि-असूयन्तः न अनु-तिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।
सर्व-ज्ञान-वि-मूढान् तान् विद्-हि नश्-तान् अ-चेतसः ॥

*ye tv etad abhyasūyanto nā 'nutiṣṭhanti me matam* ।
*sarvajñāna vimūḍhāṁs tān viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ* ॥

ये *ye* those who तु *tu* but एतत् *etat* this अभ्यसूयन्तः *abhyasūyantaḥ* carping at न *na* not अनुतिष्ठन्ति *anutiṣṭhanti* practise मे *me* my मतम् *mataṁ* teaching सर्वज्ञानविमूढान् *sarvajñāna vimūḍhān* deluded in all knowledge तान् *tān* them विद्धि *viddhi* know नष्टान् *naṣṭān* ruined अचेतसः *acetasaḥ* devoid of discrimination

प्र-कृते गुण-स मूढा सज्जन्ते गुण-कर्मसु ।
तान् अ-कृत्स्न-विद मन्दान् कृत्स्न-विद् न वि-चालयेत् ॥

*prakrter guna sammūdhāh sajjante guna karmasu* ।
*tān akrtsnavido mandān krtsnavin na vicālayet* ॥

प्रकृते *prakrteh* of nature गुणसमूढा *guna sammūdhāh* persons deluded by the gunas सज्जन्ते *sajjante* are attached गुणकर्मसु *guna karmasu* in the functions of the qualities तान् *tān* those अकृत्स्नविद. *akrtsnavidaḥ* of imperfect knowledge मन्दान् *mandān* the foolish कृत्स्नवित् *krtsnavit* man of perfect knowledge न *na* not विचालयेत् *vicālayet* should unsettle

**Those deluded by the Gunas of Prakriti get attached to the functions of the Gunas. The man of perfect knowledge should not unsettle the mediocre whose knowledge is imperfect.** **29**

No differentiation can be made between the skin and the pulp in a tender fruit. It is only after it matures and ripes that this difference comes about. Even so the mediocre make no distinction between the action-fabricated *Prakriti* and the actionless Atman. They are therefore entangled in karma. Attempt at discrimination between Atma and *Prakriti* will only lead to confusion of understanding. There is no harm in their performing their duties with attachment They should therefore be encouraged to be more and more active. Work with attachment has its place in the evolution of man. But the way of the spiritual aspirant should be as follows :—

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ ३०

**Even a wise man behaves in conformity with his own nature; beings follow nature; what shall restraint avail? 33**

Some plants grow tall and slender while others shrubby and stout; some fruits taste sweet while others bitter. The varying natures in the vegetation cannot be changed, but they can be augmented and enriched. Variation in nature is much more pronounced in the human than in the other species. Dispositions are divergent even among the enlightened. One is an introvert and another an extrovert. A saint is given to devotion and a sage to discrimination. The yogi disciplines the mind while the man of action lovingly serves mankind. Attaining perfection is their thread of unity in the midst of mental variations. No violence should be done to the vagaries even in saints. Each must be allowed and encouraged to evolve in line with his temperament.

The earthy among men are bound fast to things mundane. Obstructing their worldly ways avails nothing. Inducing them to evolve in tune with their nature aids their growth. Slow sublimation of their nature is the greatest service that can be rendered to them.

An individual complained to Sri Ramakrishna that he found it impossible to turn his mind Godward. It was asked of him as to what was the thing or being that he loved most. The man pondered for a while and said that he was inordinately attached to a goat that he reared. A suggestion was then made to him to think of that goat as imbued with divinity and meditate on it. The man did so and had his mind slowly turned Godward.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥ ३१

ये मे मतम् इदम् नित्यम् अनु तिष्ठन्ति मानवा ।
श्रद्धा-वन्त अन् असू-यन्त मुच्यन्ते ते अपि कर्मभि ॥

*ye me matam idam nityam anutisthanti mānavāḥ* ।
*śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ* ॥

ये *ye* those who मे *me* my मतम् *matam* teaching इदम् *idam* this नित्यम् *nityam* constantly अनुतिष्ठन्ति *anutiṣthanti* practise मानवा *mānavāḥ* men श्रद्धावन्त *śraddhāvantah* full of faith अनसूयन्त *anasūyantaḥ* not cavilling मुच्यन्ते *mucyante* are freed ते *te* they अपि *api* also कर्मभिः *karmabhiḥ* from actions

**Those who ever abide in this teaching of Mine, full of sraddha and free from cavilling, they too are released from actions. 31**

A wayfarer is unable to find out by himself the intricate path to his destination But he places faith on those who go that way and follows their instructions By this means he is sure to achieve the end. A pilgrim in the path of spirituality is of mediocre understanding in that field It is no disadvantage if he with *sraddha* entrusts himself to the adepts in yoga Even he gets freed from the shackles of karma

*Sraddha* is a state of mind conducive to all round advancement Ardently applying oneself to an undertaking, to be meek and accommodative with the others, placing faith in fellow beings—these are all characteristics of *sraddha* To be submissive to the preceptor is the mark of having *sraddha* in him.

their power to function. When these dualities are done away with, the senses cease to be enemies. Likes and dislikes are created by the egoistic attitude. When this hurtful attitude is changed into the helpful devotional attitude, likes and dislikes melt away; the senses in their turn get tamed down.

The function of the scriptures is to exhort man to change his attitude from the base to the noble. When the life for the individual is converted into the life for the Lord, the senses cease to be enemies.

When can desire and hatred, the enemies of man be destroyed? These propensities of the mind prove themselves enemies when directed to worldly affairs. They become allies when directed Godward. Desires for worldly things must be converted into the desire for God. Let man be annoyed with God and angry with Him for not revealing Himself. Desire and anger cannot be totally destroyed, but they can be transmuted; then they become harmless.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Attachment and aversion cause harm in other respects also. The evil ensuing from them is enunciated :—

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ ३५

श्रेयान् स्व-धर्मः वि-गुणः पर-धर्मात् सु-अनु-स्थितात् ।
स्व-धर्मे निधनम् श्रेयः पर-धर्मः भय-आ-वहः ॥

*śreyān svadharmo viguṇaḥ paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt* ।
*svadharme nidhanaṁ śreyaḥ paradharmo bhayāvahaḥ* ॥

श्रेयान् *śreyān* better स्वधर्मः *svadharmaḥ* one's own duty विगुणः *viguṇaḥ* devoid of merit परधर्मात् *paradharmāt* than the duty of another स्वनुष्ठितात् *svanuṣṭhitāt*

**But those who carp at My teaching and act not thereon, deluded in all knowledge and devoid of discrimination, know them to be ruined. 32**

Fire hurts the one who mishandles it and it cooks food for another who utilizes it properly. Losers are they who do not know of this law of nature Moral and spiritual laws are not different from the laws of nature Those who avail themselves of these laws progress and prosper, while those others who defy and break them come to grief and debasement.

Cat s claws and teeth are benevolent to the kitten and malevolent to the rat Similarly *maya*, the power of the Lord, is beneficial to His devotees and harmful to the malefactors

— Sri Ramakrishna

Laws of life pertaining to all, inclusive of the enlightened and the ignorant, are as follows —

**Spiritual Practices Conforming to Dispositions — 33 35**

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥ ३३

सदृशम् चेष्टते स्वस्या प्रकृते ज्ञान-वान् अपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि नि ग्रह किम् करिष्यति ॥

*sadṛśam ceṣṭate svasyāh prakṛter jñānavān apı* ।
*prakrtım yāntı bhūtānı nıgrahaḥ kım karısyatı* ॥

सदृशम् *sadṛśam* in accordance चेष्टते *cestate* acts स्वस्या *svasyāḥ* of his own प्रकृते *prakṛteh* of nature ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* a wise man अपि *apı* even प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtım* to nature यान्ति *yāntı* follow भूतानि *bhūtānı* beings निग्रह *nıgrahah* restraint किम् *kım* what करिष्यति *karısyatı* will do

have proved himself a coward if he had changed his dharma. Man should always evolve in the make up best suited to him.

A professional farmer does not lose courage and continues to cultivate even if there be a terrible drought for twelve long years. But a weaver who takes to tilling for a change of occupation gets disheartened if rain fails for one season. A true devotee does not deviate from the path of devotion for any reason whatsoever. In life and death he relies on the Lord.

**— Sri Ramakrishna**

In chapter two stanzas 62 and 63 and in chapter three stanza 34, the root cause of all evils has been unmistakably pointed out. Still Arjuna raises that question again here for further elucidation :—

**The Origin of Sin — 36-43**

अर्जुन उवाच

**अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।**
**अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ ३६**

अथ केन प्र-युज्-तः अयम् पापम् चरति पूरुषः ।
अन्-इच्छन् अपि वार्ष्णेय बलात् इव नि-योजितः ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*atha kena prayukto 'yaṁ pāpaṁ carati pūruṣaḥ* ।
*anicchann api vārṣṇeya balād iva niyojitaḥ* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

अथ *atha* now केन *kena* by which प्रयुक्तः *prayuktaḥ* impelled अयम् *ayaṁ* this पापम् *pāpaṁ* sin चरति *carati* does पूरुषः *pūruṣaḥ* man अनिच्छन् *anicchan* not wishing अपि *api* even वार्ष्णेय *vārṣṇeya* O Varshneya बलात् *balāt* by force इव *iva* as it were नियोजितः *niyojitaḥ* constrained

Each man is an embodiment of his own nature. If following one's nature is the proper way for salvation, then self-control and discipline become purposeless The scriptural injunctions, "Do this, refrain from that" etc, are unnecessary Objections of this kind may pertinently arise Clarification of this issue now ensues —

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४

इन्द्रियस्य इन्द्रियस्य अर्थे राग द्वेषौ वि अव स्थितौ ।
तयो न वशम् आ गच्छेत् तौ हि अस्य परि पन्थिनौ ॥

*indriyasye 'ndriyasyā 'rthe rāgadvesau vyavasthitau* ।
*tayor na vaśam āgacchet tau hy asya paripanthinau* ॥

इन्द्रियस्य *indriyasya* to the senses इन्द्रियस्य *indriyasya* of the senses अर्थे *arthe* in the object रागद्वेषौ *rāgadvesau* attachment and aversion व्यवस्थितौ *vyavasthitau* seated तयो *tayoh* of these two न *na* not वशम् *vaśam* sway आगच्छेत् *āgacchet* should come under तौ *tau* these two हि *hi* verily अस्य *asya* his परिपन्थिनौ *paripanthinau* foes

**Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are natural, let none come under their domination; they are verily his enemies. 34**

Life in the body and in the senses is not an end in itself, it is only a passing phase Senses have been serviceable for the evolution of the subhuman into the human Now the goal for the human is to evolve into the divine Senses are stumbling-blocks to it They are therefore labelled the enemies of the spiritual aspirant They require to be transcended It is from attachments and aversions that they get

cannot be appeased by supplying it with sense-objects. The more it gluts, the more it craves. Sin increases in direct proportion to desire. It is therefore Satan, the arch-enemy of man.

Time and again man gets humiliated because of his being victim to lust and greed. Still he is unable to recoil from them and give his thought to God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How desire clouds man's understanding is depicted now:—

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ ३८

धूमेन आ-व्रियते वह्निः यथा आ-दर्शः मलेन च ।
यथा उल्बेन आ-वृतः गर्भः तथा तेन इदम् आ-वृ-तम् ॥

*dhūmenā 'vriyate vahnir yathā 'darśo malena ca* ।
*yatho 'lbenā 'vṛto garbhas tathā tene 'dam āvṛtam* ॥

धूमेन *dhūmena* by smoke आव्रियते *āvriyate* is enveloped वह्निः *vahniḥ* fire यथा *yathā* as आदर्शः *ādarśaḥ* a mirror मलेन *malena* by dust च *ca* and यथा *yathā* as उल्बेन *ulbena* by the amnion आवृतः *āvṛtaḥ* enveloped गर्भः *garbhaḥ* embryo तथा *tathā* so तेन *tena* by it इदम् *idaṁ* this आवृतम् *āvṛtaṁ* enveloped

**As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, so is this covered by that.** **38**

The resplendent Atman is veiled in desire, which is in three grades corresponding to the predominance of the three Gunas. Desire dominated by *Sattva guna* is like fire being choked with smoke. A little blowing will set it ablaze and the smoke will disappear.

than well-discharged स्वधर्मे *svadharme* in one's own duty निधनम् *nidhanam* death श्रेयः *śreyah* better परधर्मः *paradharmaḥ* another's duty भयावहः *bhayāvahaḥ* fraught with fear

**One's own dharma, though imperfect, is better than the dharma of another well discharged. Better death in one's own dharma; the dharma of another is full of fear.** **35**

Man's nature is to have recourse to what gives pleasure and to recoil from what gives pain. Arjuña's temporary set back illustrates this position. From boyhood onwards he had been trained for the dharma of a ruler and a warrior. He delighted in being trained that way, because it was his own duty, *svadharma*. The impending righteous war demanded his fighting against the revered grandsire, which he did not like; he even hated it. At this juncture he preferred to be a recluse, subsisting on alms. Nothing good accrues to one by changing one's *svadharma*, prompted by fear or hatred. Abandoning one's duty and embracing that of another, enticed by ease and pleasure are equally harmful. Vacillation of the mind is born of weakness; it depraves man more and more. Steadfastness to duty on the other hand, strengthens man and aids the building of character. Constancy is life and vacillation death. Through firm devotion to duty man gains in excellence. Arjuna was about to lose his manliness through a change of dharma. Even if he had lived a hermit's life as best he could, his conscience would have been clouded; and that was worse than death. He would

Desire grown to the stature of greed is a destructive force and an enemy to all human beings. But the ignorant among them who come under its sway hold it as a helpful friend. Whenever a set back and humiliation ensue from it, the destructive force of desire is momentarily detested as a treacherous factor in the make up of man. But this feeling vanishes as quickly as it dawns. The unwary ignorant choose to ally with it always. But the case of the knowing man is different. Both while under the influence of desire and while holding it in abeyance the wise man views it as his sworn enemy. He likes no alliance with it. Still, in spite of him, it steals into his heart assuming innumerable forms and trying to allure him. It is therefore the constant foe of the wise.

The indicator in the balance moves away from the middle point when there is more weight on one side. The mind of man moves away from God allured by the weight of lust and greed.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Wherein does desire reside? The answer comes:-

इन्द्रियाणि मनोबुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४०

इन्द्रियाणि मनः बुध्-तिः अस्य अधि-स्था-नम् उच्यते ।
एतैः वि-मोहयति एषः ज्ञानम् आ-वृत्य देहिनम् ॥

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir asyā 'dhiṣṭhānam ucyate* ।
*etair vimohayaty eṣa jñānam āvṛtya dehinam* ॥

इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the senses मनः *manaḥ* the mind बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* the intellect अस्य *asya* its अधिष्ठानम् *adhiṣṭhānaṁ* seat उच्यते *ucyate* is called एतैः *etaiḥ* by these विमोहयति *vimohayati* deludes एषः *eṣaḥ* this ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ*

Arjuna said:

**But dragged on by what does a man commit sin, unwillingly though, O Varshneya, constrained as it were by force? 36**

Sri Krishna is here addressed as Varshneya because of his coming of the Vrishni race.

श्री भगवानुवाच

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ ३७

कामः एषः क्रोधः एषः रज -गुण-सम्-उद्-भवः ।
महा-अशनः महा-पाप्मा विद्-धि एनम् इह वैरिणम् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*kāma eṣa krodha esa rajoguṇa samudbhavaḥ* ।
*mahāśano mahāpāpmā viddhy enam iha vairiṇam* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

कामः *kāmah* desire एषः *eṣah* this क्रोधः *krodhah* anger एषः *eṣaḥ* this रजोगुणसमुद्भवः *rajoguna samudbhavaḥ* born of the Rajo-guna महाशनः *mahāśanaḥ* all-devouring महापाप्मा *mahāpāpmā* all-sinful विद्धि *viddhi* know एनम् *enaṁ* this इह *iha* here वैरिणम् *vairiṇam* the foe

The Blessed Lord said:

**It is desire, it is wrath begotten by the Rajo-guna; all-consuming, all-sinful, know this as the foe here on earth. 37**

Desire is the most destructive foe of man. When this desire is obstructed it transforms itself into wrath. The Lord therefore treats both as one. It takes its origin in *Rajas* and aggravates it further. As fire cannot be satiated by feeding it with fuel, desire

the Bharatas पाप्मानम् *pāpmānaṁ* the sinful प्रजहि *prajahi* kill हि *hi* surely एनम् *enaṁ* this ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् *jñāna-vijñāna nāśanaṁ* the destroyer of the knowledge and realization

**Therefore, O eminent of the Bharatas, mastering first the senses, slay it — the sinful, the destroyer of knowledge and realization. 41**

When the protecting fort is taken by storm, the enemy's position becomes vulnerable. It is easy to subdue him then. Lay hold of the senses, mind and intellect using them for divine causes and desire is thereby done away with.

A clear grasp of the teachings of the scriptures is classified here as knowledge. Intuiting the Reality is realization. Both of these become impossible to a man of worldly desires. The splendour of Atman gets smothered by desire, which is therefore condemned as sinful. The conqueror of desire is indeed a hero. Lord Siva's burning Cupid to ashes is a mythological exposition of the conquest of desire.

What is *maya*? It is none other than the desire that obstructs the spiritual growth of the aspirant.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The strategic positions to be taken up for uprooting desire are now delineated :—

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२

इन्द्रियाणि पराणि आहुः इन्द्रियेभ्यः परम् मनः ।
मनसः तु परा बुद्धिः यः बुद्धेः पर-तः तु सः ॥

*indriyāṇi parāṇy āhur indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ |*
*manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ ||*

Discrimination likewise drives out the thin cloud of *sattvic* desire and reveals Atman as It is. Some effort is required to remove the dust on a mirror. Even so *rajasic* desire demands strenuous attempt for its removal. Lastly *tamasic* desire is compared with an embryo in the womb. Time and regulated living are the factors for the embryo to develop and be delivered as a baby. Time and self-preparations are necessary to eliminate the deep-rooted *tamasic* desire.

As a patch of cloud hides the blazing sun, *maya* in the form of desire hides Iswara. When the cloud disappears the sun becomes visible When desire disappears Iswara reveals Himself.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Desire is further analysed :—

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९

आ-वृ-तम् ज्ञानम् एतेन ज्ञानिनः नित्य-वैरिणा ।
काम-रूपेण कौन्तेय दुस्-पूरेण अनलेन च ॥

*āvrtaṁ jñānam etena jñānino nityavairinā* ।
*kāmarūpeṇa kaunteya duspūreṇā 'nalena ca* ॥

आवृतम् *āvṛtaṁ* enveloped ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* wisdom एतेन *etena* by this ज्ञानिनः *jñāninaḥ* of the wise नित्यवैरिणा *nityavairiṇā* by the constant enemy कामरूपेण *kāmarūpeṇa* whose form is desire कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya दुष्पूरेण *duṣpūreṇa* unappeasable अनलेन *analena* by fire च *ca* and

**Knowledge is covered, O son of Kunti, by this insatiable fire of desire, the constant foe of the wise.39**

embodied. How to do away with desire, subtle as well as gross, is the question. The sovereign solution is presented :—

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥ ४३

एवम् बुध्-तेः परम् बुध्-त्वा सम्-स्तभ्य आत्मानम् आत्मना ।
जहि शत्रुम् महा-बाहो काम-रूपम् दुर्-आ-सदम् ॥

*evaṁ buddheḥ paraṁ buddhvā*
*saṁstabhyā 'tmānam ātmanā* ।
*jahi śatruṁ mahābāho*
*kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam* ॥

एवम् *evaṁ* thus बुद्धेः *buddheḥ* than the intellect परम् *paraṁ* superior बुद्ध्वा *buddhvā* having known संस्तभ्य *saṁstabhya* restraining आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the self आत्मना *ātmanā* by the Self जहि *jahi* slay thou शत्रुम् *śatruṁ* the enemy महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed कामरूपम् *kāmarūpaṁ* of the form of desire दुरासदम् *durāsadaṁ* hard to conquer

**Thus knowing Him as superior to the intellect, restraining the self by the Self, slay, O mighty-armed, the enemy in the form of desire, difficult to overcome.**
**43**

When desire is centred on body, the senses, mind and intellect the *Jiva* consciousness or individualized little self is fostered. This little self is ever wrought with misery. Foolishly do people think it is imbued with happiness. Every happiness associated with the body, the senses, mind and intellect is bound, sooner or later, to reappear as misery. There is no escape from it. *Atma bodham* or spiritual con-

wisdom आवृत्य *āvrtya* having enveloped देहिनम् *dehinam* the embodied

**The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its seat; by these it deludes man by veiling his wisdom.** **40**

The fort that protects the enemy has to be spotted out before laying siege to it The foe of desire has usurped the fort of the heart of man. He has captivated the senses, mind and intellect Perforce he makes them serve his base pleasures The senses are sent out on lustful missions. The mind is made to cogitate on covetous concepts The intellect is directed on designs that are vulgar. These instruments that are evolved to serve the Supreme are, alas, utilized in profligacy.

*The mind directed to sensuous things is like a holy man* living in the midst of hooligans, or like a wealthy man living in a slum

— Sri Ramakrishna

How to subjugate desire? The way is pointed out:—

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१

तस्मात् त्वम् इन्द्रियाणि आदौ नि-यम्-य भरत-ऋषभ ।
पाप्मानम् प्र-जहि हि एनम् ज्ञान-वि-ज्ञान-नाशनम् ॥

*tasmāt tvam indriyāny ādau niyamya bharata ṛsabha* ।
*pāpmānam prajahi hy enam jñānavijñāna nāśanam* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore त्वम् *tvam* you इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāni* the senses आदौ *ādau* in the beginning नियम्य *niyamya* having controlled भरत ऋषभ *bharata ṛsabha* O best of

# ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगः

JNANA KARMA SANYASA YOGA

THE YOGA OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION IN KNOWLEDGE

## CHAPTER IV

Master and Disciple Lineage—The Advent and Acts of the Incarnation — Diverse Means to the Same End — Fruit of the Worship of the Minor Deities — The Four Grades of People — The Philosophy of Action — Varieties of Sacrifices — The Supremacy of Knowledge — Doubt is Derogatory.

**Master and Disciple Lineage — 1-3**

श्री भगवानुवाच

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ १

इमम् विवस्वते योगम् प्र-उक्तवान् अहम् अ-वि-अयम् ।
विवस्वान् मनवे प्र-आह मनुः इक्ष्वाकवे अ-ब्रवीत् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ proktavān aham avyayam* ।
*vivasvān manave prāha manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said: इमम् *imaṁ* this विवस्वते *vivasvate* to Vivasvat योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga प्रोक्तवान् *proktavān* taught अहम् *ahaṁ* I अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* imperishable विवस्वान् *vivasvān* Vivasvat मनवे *manave* to Manu प्राह *prāha* taught मनुः *manuḥ* Manu इक्ष्वाकवे *ikṣvākave* to Ikshvaku अब्रवीत् *abravīt* taught

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**This imperishable yoga, I declared to Vivasvat; Vivasvat taught it to Manu, Manu told it to Ikshvaku. 1**

*Moksha* or the spiritual emancipation being imperishable, yoga or the means to it is also desig-

इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the senses पराणि *parāni* superior आहुः *āhuḥ* they say इन्द्रियेभ्यः *indriyebhyaḥ* than the senses परम् *param* superior मन *manah* the mind मनसः *manasaḥ* than the mind तु *tu* but परा *parā* superior बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect यः *yaḥ* who बुद्धेः *buddheh* than the intellect परतः *paratah* greater तु *tu* but सः *saḥ* he

**The senses are said to be superior to the body; the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind; and what is superior to the intellect is Atman. 42**

A thing subtle is always superior to another, gross. The senses, five in number, excel the gross body. Mind dominates over the senses and so it is superior to them. Intellect comes above the mind in that it decides while the latter merely feels. Atman supplies light to the intellect itself and therefore it is above all these instruments utilized by It.

The skin and other coverings of a fruit are of varying grades. The interior sheaths progressively assume more and more of the characteristics of the pulp which is the main factor in it. Similarly, in the make up of man the subtle organs are more akin to Atman, than the gross.

Desire clings more tenaciously to the subtle than to the gross. Attachment to the body easily gives place to the attachment to the senses; from the senses it shifts to the mind; from the mind it rises to the intellect. Attachment to all of these categories leads to bondage and brings untold misery to the

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ ३

सः एव अयम् मया ते अद्य योगः प्र-उक्तः पुरा-तनः ।
भक्तः अस्-सि मे सखा च इति रहस्यम् हि एतत् उत्तमम् ॥

*sa evā 'yaṁ mayā te 'dya yogaḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ* ।
*bhakto 'si me sakhā ce 'ti rahasyaṁ hy etad uttamam* ॥

सः *saḥ* that एव *eva* even अयम् *ayaṁ* this मया *mayā* by me ते *te* to thee अद्य *adya* today योगः *yogaḥ* yoga प्रोक्तः *proktaḥ* has been taught पुरातनः *purātanaḥ* ancient भक्तः *bhaktaḥ* devotee असि *asi* thou art मे *me* my सखा *sakhā* friend च *ca* and इति *iti* thus रहस्यम् *rahasyaṁ* secret हि *hi* for एतत् *etat* this उत्तमम् *uttamaṁ* best

**The same ancient yoga has been today told you by Me, for you are My devotee and friend; and this secret is supreme indeed.** **3**

Secrecy is maintained in regard to many things worldly, because of selfishness or because of their being harmful if abused. The science of yoga remains a secret not for these reasons, but because of the incompetency of man to pursue it properly. It becomes obscure when the right sort of people become rare in society. Now Arjuna, a worthy recipient has appeared and therefore a new revelation of yoga also ensues. What a man has made himself worthy of, that comes to him spontaneously. This fulfilment is called the law by some and the grace by others.

Arjuna is here beset with a doubt. He presents it to the Lord :—

sciousness is to be awakened. Following in its wake, the body, the senses, mind and intellect have all to serve Atman. The base desire automatically vanishes; the little self dwindles away; the real Self emerges; bliss infinitude becomes patent, never again to be clouded. Life shines in the glory of Atman.

No sooner is a thief detected than he takes to his heels When you know the nature of *maya* it flees from you.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे कर्मयोगो नाम
तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde karma yogo nāma tṛtīyo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the third discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF ACTION



*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*bahuni me vyatītāni janmāni tava cā 'rjuna* ।
*tāny ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi na tvaṁ vettha paraṁtapa* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

बहूनि *bahūni* many मे *me* my व्यतीतानि *vyatītāni* have passed away जन्मानि *janmāni* births तव *tava* thy च *ca* and अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna तानि *tāni* them अहम् *ahaṁ* I वेद *veda* know सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* all न *na* not त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou वेत्थ *vettha* knowest परंतप *paraṁtapa* O Parantapa

The Blessed Lord said:

**Many are the births taken by Me and you, O Arjuna. I know them all while you know not, O Parantapa. 5**

Arjuna is a *Jivatman* bound by karma. So he has no memory of his previous births. But Krishna is an Incarnation of Iswara. He is therefore ever pure, ever free and omniscient. He can call to the mind how the Cosmic Intelligence assumed a form previously and enlightened Vivasvat.

Incarnations are all the personifications of Iswara. In the ocean of *Sat-chit-ananda* a wave rises up in one place at one time and it is called Krishna. Another wave rises at another place some time later and it is called Christ.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The bound souls are born to work out their karma. But the Lord is above karma. How then does He incarnate? The revelation comes :—

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ ६

nated as imperishable. Man's endeavours for emancipation are everlasting; practice of yoga is also therefore everlasting.

Vivasvat is the name of Surya, the sun god. Manu is the ruler immortalized by his Smriti — the code of conduct Ikshvaku is the first among the kings of solar dynasty. When the rulers of kingdoms come to know of this supreme wisdom they tackle the worldly problems more diligently.

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥ २

एवम् परम्परा-प्राप्तम् इमम् राज-ऋषयः विदुः ।
स कालेन इह महता योग. नश्-तः परम्-तप ॥

*evam paramparā prāptam imam rāja rsayo viduh* ।
*sa kālene 'ha mahatā yogo nastaḥ paramtapa* ॥

एवम् *evam* thus परम्परा प्राप्तम् *paramparā prāptam* handed down in regular succession इमम् *imam* this राज ऋषय *rāja rsayaḥ* the royal sages विदु *viduh* knew सः *sah* this कालेन *kālena* by lapse of time इह *iha* here महता *mahatā* by long योग *yogaḥ* yoga नष्ट *nastaḥ* destroyed परंतप *paramtapa* O Parantapa

**Thus transmitted in regular succession the royal-sages knew it. This yoga, by long efflux of time decayed in this world, O scorcher of foes. 2**

When the right type of men become scarce, the right system also dwindles away. As the shadow follows the substance, a good system comes in again with the advent of proper people. Here the Lord clarifies this fact :—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिः भवति भारत ।
अभि-उद्-थानम् अ-धर्मस्य तदा आत्मानम् सृजामि अहम् ॥

*yadā-yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata |*
*abhyutthānam adharmasya tadā 'tmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham||*

यदा यदा *yadā-yadā* whenever हि *hi* surely धर्मस्य *dharmasya* of righteousness ग्लानिः *glāniḥ* decline भवति *bhavati* is भारत *bhārata* O Bharata अभ्युत्थानम् *abhyutthānaṁ* rise अधर्मस्य *adharmasya* of unrighteousness तदा *tadā* then आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* myself सृजामि *sṛjāmi* manifest अहम् *ahaṁ* I

**Whenever there is decay of dharma and rise of adharma, then I embody Myself, O Bharata.** 7

Dharma is verily the karma that is conducive to man's growth and progress; what impedes them is *adharma.* At every time *adharma* prevails and prevents man's evolution, the Cosmic Intelligence embodies Itself, as a matter of course.

Having personified Himself, what does the Lord do? He proclaims:—

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८

परि-त्राणाय साधूनाम् वि-नाशाय च दुस्-कृताम् ।
धर्म-सं-स्थापन-अर्थाय सं-भवामि युगे युगे ॥

*paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām |*
*dharma saṁsthāpanārthāya saṁbhavāmi yuge-yuge ||*

The Advent and Acts of the Incarnation — 4·9

अर्जुन उवाच

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ४

अ परम् भवत जन्म परम् जन्म विवस्वत ।
कथम् एतत् वि जा-नीयाम् त्वम् आदौ प्र-उक्तवान् इति ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*aparam bhavato janma param janma vivasvataḥ* |
*katham etad vijānīyām tvam ādau proktavān iti* ||

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said

अपरम् *aparam* later भवत *bhavataḥ* thy जन्म *janma* birth परम् *param* prior जन्म *janma* birth विवस्वत *vivasvataḥ* of Vivasvat कथम् *katham* how एतत् *etat* this विजानीयाम् *vijānīyām* am I to understand त्वम् *tvam* thou आदौ *ādau* in the beginning प्रोक्तवान् *proktavān* taught इति *iti* thus

**Arjuna said**

**Later was your birth, earlier the birth of Vivasvat; how then am I to understand that you told it in the beginning? 4**

You are the son of Vasudeva of today. Vivasvat appeared in the beginning of creation. How can a modern man instruct an ancient one? This is Arjuna's question.

श्री भगवानुवाच

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप ॥ ५

बहूनि मे वि अति इतानि जन्मानि तव च अर्जुन ।
तानि अहम् वेद सर्वाणि न त्वम् वेत्थ परम् तप ॥

Is the living of a righteous life on earth, an end in itself, or is it a means for some other end? The elucidation comes :—

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ ९

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्-यम् एवम् यः वेद्-ति तत्त्व-तः ।
त्यज्-त्वा देहम् पुनः जन्म न एति माम् एति सः अर्जुन ॥

*janma karma ca me divyaṁ evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ* ।
*tyaktvā dehaṁ punarjanma nai 'ti mām eti so 'rjuna* ॥

जन्म *janma* birth कर्म *karma* action च *ca* and मे *me* my दिव्यम् *divyaṁ* divine एवम् *evaṁ* thus यः *yaḥ* who वेत्ति *vetti* knows तत्त्वतः *tattvataḥ* in true light त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned देहम् *dehaṁ* the body पुनः *punaḥ* again जन्म *janma* birth न *na* not एति *eti* gets माम् *māṁ* to me एति *eti* comes सः *saḥ* he अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

**He who thus knows My divine birth and action in true light, having dropped the body, comes not to birth again, but comes unto Me, O Arjuna. 9**

The unborn Iswara puts on the appearance of birth and growth by His divine power. Similarly the actionless Entity stages holy activities for the good of the world. Those spiritual men who intuit these facts about the Lord are able to live unaffected by the world even as the Incarnation does. Ultimately, while yet in the human frames and after casting them off, those blessed ones get themselves merged in the Absolute. Pondering over the play of the Divine as the human, is a sure means to get at this great goal.

Treat not the personalities such as Rama, Sita, Krishna, Radha and some others as mere allegorical entities. They were

अ-ज अपि सन् अ-वि अय आत्मा भूतानाम् ईश्-वर अपि सन् ।
प्र कृ तिम् स्वाम् अधि स्था य सम् भवामि आत्म-मायया ॥

*ajo 'pi sann avyayātmā bhūtānām iśvaro 'pi san |*
*prakṛtim svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmy ātmamāyayā ||*

अज *ajah* unborn अपि *api* also सन् *san* being अव्ययात्मा *avyayātmā* of imperishable nature भूतानाम् *bhūtānām* of beings ईश्वर *iśvaraḥ* the Lord अपि *api* also सन् *san* being प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtim* nature स्वाम् *svām* my own अधिष्ठाय *adhiṣthāya* ruling सम्भवामि *sambhavāmi* come into being आत्ममायया *ātmamāyayā* by my own maya

**Though I am unborn, imperishable and the Lord of beings, yet subjugating My Prakriti, I come into being by My own Maya. 6**

*Prakriti* or *maya-sakti* has her part to play both with the *Jivatman* and with the Incarnations of Iswara, but her function with these two entities is on diametrically opposite bases She enslaves the former and is enslaved by the latter It is by manipulating His *maya-sakti* that the unborn Lord puts on the appearance of being born and of growing The One supremely above karma apparently assumes it That karma again is not capricious The collective karma of the society as it ought to be, gets itself embodied in the Incarnation He does not stand in need of making any experiments with the various factors of life His advent simply explains the sublime plan and purpose of the human life He is the benign model to be followed by the others

Everything in nature has its time to appear. Does the Incarnation of God also come under this law in any way? The statement comes .—

It is only after filtering that muddy water becomes fit to be mixed with pure water. Mind purged from passion, fear and anger assumes competency to grasp the Divine. Then getting absorbed in It becomes easy. Through absorption the glory of the Divine is increasingly realized. There is then no difficulty whatsoever in taking refuge in what is known to be Benign. Fuel consigned to fire becomes fire itself. It is penance when individuals seek to know of the Divine and give themselves over to It. This way many have ascended from the human to the Divine. There is no purification greater than this. *Mukti* or emancipation in this wise is an eternal process.

*Maya* is inherent in Iswara. This *maya* is constituted of both *vidya* and *avidya*—knowledge and ignorance. *Vidya-maya* is made up of discrimination, devotion, detachment and love of beings. It takes the aspirant Godward. *Avidya-maya*, on the other hand, estranges man from God.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Are the ignorant ones allowed to go astray? The plan is expounded :—

**Diverse Means to the Same End — 11**

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११

ये यथा माम् प्र-पद्-यन्ते तान् तथा एव भजामि अहम् ।
मम वर्त्म अनु-वर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्व-शः ॥

*ye yathā māṁ prapadyante*
*tāṁs tathai 'va bhajāmy aham* ।
*mama vartmā 'nuvartante*
*manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ* ॥

. परित्राणाय *paritrāṇāya* for the protection साधूनाम् *sādhūnām* of the good विनाशाय *vināśāya* for the destruction च *ca* and दुष्कृताम् *duskṛtām* of the wicked धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय *dharma samsthāpanārthāya* for the firm establishment of righteousness संभवामि *sambhavāmi* I am born युगे युगे *yuge-yuge* in every age

**For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of dharma I am born age after age. 8**

Purgation is an unfailing process of Nature. The cleansing takes place at all levels in various ways. In the agricultural field it goes on as weeding and manuring. When the wicked become more in number in the world dharma would not thrive in their midst. War, pestilence, famine and such like forces inevitably come in both to strike a balance of the population and to set aright the perverts.

Among the three Gunas the predominance of *Rajas* and *Tamas* aggravates *adharma* which threatens to topple down the social fabric. The function of the Incarnation is to induce *Sattva*, the chief and foremost of the three Gunas into society. And along with it dharma begins to thrive. A balance of power among the three Gunas is necessary for social order to work on right lines.

A viceroy is deputed by the monarch to quell lawlessness and disorder in a distant dominion. Similarly an Incarnation is the man of authority sent by Iswara into society He comes to put in order all lapses and deviations in the practice of dharma.

— Sri Ramakrishna

while their readings and interpretations of Him vary infinitely.

Why are people running after little things instead of seeking the Lord Himself? The fact is explained :—

**Fruit of the Worship of the Minor Deities — 12**

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ १२

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणाम् सिद्धिम् यजन्ते इह देवताः ।
क्षिप्रम् हि मानुषे लोके सिध्-तिः भवति कर्म-जा ॥

*kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇāṁ siddhiṁ yajanta iha devatāḥ* ।
*kṣipraṁ hi mānuṣe loke siddhir bhavati karmajā* ॥

काङ्क्षन्तः *kāṅkṣantaḥ* longing for कर्मणाम् *karmaṇāṁ* of action सिद्धिम् *siddhiṁ* success यजन्ते *yajante* sacrifice इह *iha* in this world देवताः *devatāḥ* gods क्षिप्रम् *kṣipraṁ* quickly हि *hi* because मानुषे *mānuṣe* in the human लोके *loke* (in the) world सिद्धिः *siddhiḥ* success भवति *bhavati* is attained कर्मजा *karmajā* born of action

**Longing for success in action on earth, they worship the gods; for quickly is success born of action in this world of man.** **12**

The higher the ideal the more arduously one has to prepare oneself for it and the longer one has to wait for it. Self-knowledge is harder to attain than the fruits of action. What is perceived by the senses is portrayed as the world of man, where quick results can be obtained; but they are impermanent in character. The ignorant seek for sense-objects easily obtainable. Access to a monarch is hard to get, but

once in body and flesh as you are now. But because of their spiritual perfection they seem more fictitious than factual. Iswara and His Incarnations are one and the same even as the ocean and the waves are.

A visitor to a palace can see only some portions of it. But the prince apparent can have free access to all parts of the palace. Likewise Incarnations of God easily get into the various states of spiritual consciousness.

It is rather difficult to comprehend the Infinite sporting in the finite human form

During the advent of Sri Rama it was given to seven Rishis only to understand His divine descent. This way all Incarnations are understood by only a few during their life time

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

By what process did the wise make themselves worthy of comprehending the Divine? The explanation comes :—

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १०

वि-इ-त-राग-भय-क्रोधाः मद्-मया माम् उप-आ-श्रि-ताः ।
बहव. ज्ञान-तपसा पू-ताः मद्-भावम् आ-गताः ॥

*vīta rāga bhaya krodhā manmayā mām upāśritāḥ* ।
*bahavo jñāna tapasā pūtā mad bhāvam āgatāḥ* ॥

वीतरागभयक्रोधाः *vīta rāga bhaya krodhāḥ* freed from attachment, fear and anger मन्मया *manmayā* absorbed in me माम् *mām* me उपाश्रिताः *upāśritāḥ* taking refuge in बहवः *bahavaḥ* many ज्ञानतपसा *jñāna tapasā* by the fire of knowledge पूता *pūtāḥ* purified मद्भावम् *mad bhāvam* my being आगता *āgatāḥ* have attained

**Freed from passion, fear and anger, filled with Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by penance in the fire of Knowledge, many have entered into My Being.**

Kshatriya in whom *Sattva* seasoned with *Rajas* prevails. The man third in rank is the Vaisya imbued mainly with *Rajas* and sparingly with *Sattva* and *Tamas*. In Sudra the last man *Tamas* regulated by *Rajas* is in the forefront.

*Varna* literally means caste as well as colour. White, red and black are the respective colours of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. It may be mentioned here that the entire universe is an imprint of *tri-gunas* or tricolour. With the variations of the three Gunas in man his colour undergoes change. The four classes of men are respectively white, lotus-red, yellow and black in colour. But this does not refer to the colour of the skin. If it did, all white races would be Brahmanas, Red Indians of America, Kshatriyas, Mongolians Vaisyas, and persons like Rama and Krishna Sudras. Facts in Nature do not warrant this position.

The worth of man is in the mind and not in the body. Mind has its colour according to Guna. As man evolves, Guna and mind which are interrelated get refined. The colour or the class of man goes up accordingly. From Sudrahood to Brahmanahood man evolves mentally, passing through Vaisyahood and Kshatriyahood. The enlightened alone see into the colour of the mind and know who is who among men.

The worldly man's classification of himself into the four castes based on birth and parentage is merely a convention hardly ever tallying with his attainments. But the Vedanta philosophical position

ये *ye* who यथा *yathā* in whatever way माम् *mām* me प्रपद्यन्ते *prapadyante* approach तान् *tān* them तथा *tathā* so एव *eva* even भजामि *bhajāmi* reward अहम् *aham* I मम *mama* my वर्त्म *vartma* path अनुवर्तन्ते *anuvartante* follow मनुष्याः *manuṣyāḥ* men पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* in all ways

**In whatever way men identify with Me, in the same way do I carry out their desires; men pursue My path, O Partha, in all ways. 11**

Different kinds of food suit different beings. What is food to one may be poison to another. But each being receives nourishment from the food it takes. Religions are similarly divergent to suit the varying temperaments. Worship with the aid of an image, for example, is a help to one and a hindrance to another. An act held as the adoration of the Almighty by one path, is abhorred as blasphemy by another. But the same Lord recognizes the need for all these divergent paths, understands the urge in the hearts of the various types of devotees and graciously helps them all to attain perfection. It is incumbent on the aspirant to see into this universalism of the Lord. He sees into the glory of the Lord who sees how He is shaping all beings through their various paths.

The same Reality presents Itself as Nature when contacted through the senses, mind and intellect. Therefore, the sense-bound pleasure seekers are also adoring the same Reality in accordance with their understanding and attainments. All beings are verily resting in God and enjoying Him only,

in the fruit of action स्पृहा *spṛhā* desire इति *iti* thus माम् *māṁ* me यः *yaḥ* who अभिजानाति *abhijānāti* knows कर्मभिः *karmabhiḥ* by actions न *na* not सः *saḥ* he बध्यते *badhyate* is bound

**Nor do actions taint Me, nor is the fruit of action desired by Me. He who thus knows Me is not bound by actions. 14**

Karma produces modifications of the mind in the egoistic man. 'I do', 'I enjoy'—attitudes such as these are the modifications. But the Lord is free from egoism. He is therefore untainted by actions. It is desire when one seeks a thing not one's own. The Lord has everything contained in Him and He transcends them all too. Therefore, He has nothing to desire. The spiritual aspirant who comes to know of this glory of the Lord would like to be himself untainted by egoism and free from desire. Emulation of the great is the way of the elite.

Did they, who knew of the actionlessness of the Lord, neglect their duty? The Lord deals with that point :—

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५

एवम् ज्ञा-त्वा कृतम् कर्म पूर्वैः अपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्म एव तस्मात् त्वम् पूर्वैः पूर्व-तरम् कृतम् ॥

*evaṁ jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ*
*kuru karmai 'va tasmāt tvaṁ pūrvaiḥ pūrvataraṁ kṛtam*

एवं *evaṁ* thus ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known कृतम् *kṛtaṁ* (was) done कर्म *karma* actions पूर्वैः *pūrvaiḥ* by ancients अपि *api* also मुमुक्षुभिः *mumukṣubhiḥ* seekers

it is very consequential. Acquaintance with a petty page of a monarch is easily got, but it is of no consequence. Devotion, wisdom, salvation and such like divine gifts come to the worshipper of Iswara. Votaries of the minor gods get their deserts accordingly. Ideals vary according to the mental attainments of people.

How are we to know of the attainments of people? The explanation comes:—

**The Four Grades of People — 13-15**

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ १३

चातुः-वर्ण्यम् मया सृज्-तम् गुण-कर्म-वि-भाग-शः ।
तस्य कर्तारम् अपि माम् विद्-धि अ-कर्तारम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇakarma vibhāgaśaḥ* ।
*tasya kartāram api mām viddhy akartāram avyayam* ॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यम् *cāturvarṇyaṁ* the fourfold caste मया *mayā* by me सृष्टम् *sṛṣṭam* has been created गुणकर्मविभागशः *guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ* according to the differentiation of Guna and karma तस्य *tasya* thereof कर्तारम् *kartāram* the author अपि *api* also माम् *mām* me विद्धि *viddhi* know अकर्तारम् *akartāraṁ* non-doer अव्ययम् *avyayam* immutable

**The fourfold caste was created by Me by the different distribution of Guna and karma. Though I be the author thereof, know Me to be the actionless and changeless. 13**

Creation is effected by variation in the distribution of Gunas. That *Jiva* in whom *Sattva-guna* predominates is classified as Brahmana. He is a

The worst of all evils is that pertaining to the wheel of birth and death. To put an end to this endless evil, the way of action should be understood. It should not be thought that merely toiling to the utmost is the way of karma. For,

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७

कर्मणः हि अपि बोध्-तव्यम् बोध्-तव्यम् च वि-कर्मणः ।
अ-कर्मणः च बोध्-तव्यम् गहना कर्मणः गतिः ॥

*karmaṇo hy api boddhavyaṁ*
*boddhavyaṁ ca vikarmaṇaḥ* ।
*akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyaṁ*
*gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ* ॥

कर्मणः *karmaṇaḥ* of action हि *hi* for अपि *api* also बोद्धव्यम् *boddhavyaṁ* should be known बोद्धव्यम् *boddhavyaṁ* should be known च *ca* and विकर्मणः *vikarmaṇaḥ* of the forbidden action अकर्मणः *akarmaṇaḥ* of inaction च *ca* and बोद्धव्यम् *boddhavyaṁ* should be known गहना *gahanā* deep कर्मणः *karmaṇaḥ* of action गतिः *gatiḥ* the path

**It is needful to discriminate action, to discriminate forbidden action, and to discriminate inaction; inscrutable is the way of karma. 17**

What the scriptures advocate as auspicious work is here designated as action; and what they prohibit as harmful and inauspicious work is described as forbidden action. But the forbidden action is not dealt with here. It is elaborately explained in chapters 16 and 17.

is that among four brothers all the four *Varnas* may be evident. The real classification is based on the degree of ethical and spiritual perfection. (The actions of the four castes are explained in chap. 18 stanzas 42, 43 and 44 )

Things sentient and insentient are all constituted of the three Gunas. They lend themselves therefore to the natural division into the four *Varnas* mentioned by the Lord. The plan of Nature is that beings low in *Varna* evolve into those high

If the social structure fabricated by man conforms with the divine plan of the fourfold caste, there is progress in that society; but it deteriorates to the extent it deviates from the divine plan. The Incarnations of God that come age after age set aright the fallen *Varna dharma.*

How the Lord remains actionless and changeless even while propelling the whole universe is explained in chapter 9 stanzas 5 to 10.

Is there any benefit to an aspirant from the Lord's statement that He is in fact actionless and changeless ? It is explained :—

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥ १४

न माम् कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्म-फले स्पृहा ।
इति माम् यः अभि-जानाति कर्मभि न स बध्-यते ॥

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti na me karmaphale spṛhā* ।
*iti māṁ yo 'bhijānāti karmabhir na sa badhyate* ॥

न *na* not माम् *mām* me कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions लिम्पन्ति *limpanti* taint न *na* not मे *me* my कर्मफले *karmaphale*

the one are often imposed on the other due to ignorance. The ignorant man thinks of himself as the body. "Now I work; now I rest" — thus does he transpose the function of *Prakriti* on Atman. Mistaking the non-Self for Self is egoism. There is agency in the egoistic man. The agency-laden egoistic man may be sitting quiet abandoning all his duties. Even in that inert state he is verily a doer of karma. This ignorant condition is designated as action in inaction. In contrast with this, there is no trace of egoism in the man of Self-realization. While his body works incessantly, the Self remains as a witness. Atman is in nowise entangled in karma. The sense of over-work, under-work or neglect of duty is not in the knower of the Self. This supreme position is recognized as inaction in action. Only they who have attained Self-knowledge and they who are on the right path to Self-knowledge can be in this benign state. — Sri Sankara

2. Activities taking place in and through the body, mind and senses are designated as karma or action; and the Knowledge Supreme as akarma or inaction.

A man earnestly takes to cookery. He occupies himself with cooking. This results in his acquiring knowledge of cookery. Seeing inaction in action is the process of adding to one's knowledge by doing one's duty properly. He who has a wide knowledge in cookery is able to execute that art efficiently. This leads to seeing action in inaction. This way karma enriches knowledge and knowledge brings in proficiency in work.

after freedom कुरु *kuru* perform कर्म *karma* action एव *eva* even तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore त्वम् *tvam* thou पूर्वैः *pūrvaiḥ* by ancients पूर्वतरम् *pūrvataram* in the olden time कृतम् *kṛtam* done

**Having known thus even the ancient seekers after freedom performed action; therefore do you perform action, as did the ancients in the olden times. 15**

The knowing aspirant abandons egoism and desire, he does not give up karma The seekers of freedom walked this way through ages This principle has not been enunciated newly for the sake of Arjuna Why was he then confused on this issue? There was nothing strange in it The fact is —

**The Philosophy of Action — 16-22**

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६

किम् कर्म किम् अ कर्म इति कवय अपि अत्र मोहिता ।
तत् ते कर्म प्र-वक्ष्यामि यत् ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसे अ-शुभात् ॥

*kim karma kim akarme 'ti kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ* ।
*tat te karma pravaksyāmi yaj jñātvā moksyase 'śubhāt* ॥

किम् *kim* what कर्म *karma* action किम् *kim* what अकर्म *akarma* inaction इति *iti* thus कवय *kavayaḥ* sages अपि *api* also अत्र *atra* in this मोहिता *mohitāḥ* (are) deluded तत् *tat* that ते *te* to thee कर्म *karma* action प्रवक्ष्यामि *pravaksyāmi* (I) shall teach यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known मोक्ष्यसे *moksyase* (thou) shall be liberated अशुभात् *aśubhāt* from evil

**Sages too are perplexed as to what is action, what inaction. Therefore I shall tell you what action is, by knowing which you shall be freed from evil. 16**

are thereby created. Giving up auspicious action is inaction leading to encumbrances. Creating new entanglements in this way or seeing action in inaction, is not the way of the enlightened.

— Sridhara

5. Mind requires to be cultured both in society and in solitude. If the mind can maintain its equilibrium and calmness while being engaged in a roaring battle, it is seeing inaction in action. While one is bodily detached from the turmoils of the world and placed in a far off deep mountain cave, if one's mind goes Godward steadily and earnestly, it is seeing action in inaction.

It will not do for the mind to be lop-sided in its development. There are those who are habituated to solitude. If such people be dragged into the tumultuous society, they go mad. There are others immersed in the throngs of the world. A day of solitary confinement is enough to turn them insane. Both of these types of men are partially trained. The perfectly trained alone are at their best both in solitude and in society. They are tuned both to action and inaction.

— Swami Vivekananda

6. Sri Krishna and Arjuna arrive at Kurukshetra, the former driving the chariot and the latter impatient to fight. The implications of the war that is about to commence flash in Arjuna's mind just now. He throws away the bow and arrows. "I want not this vainglorious warfare," says he and sits quiet.

Sri Krishna and Arjuna now present two different pictures, one contradicting the other. The Lord

The characteristics of action and inaction are :—

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ १८

कर्मणि अ-कर्म यः पश्येत् अ-कर्मणि च कर्म यः ।
सः बुद्धि-मान् मनुष्येषु सः युज्-तः कृत्स्न-कर्म-कृत् ॥

*karmany akarma yaḥ pasyed akarmani ca karma yah* |
*sa buddhimān manuṣyeṣu sa yuktah krtsnakarmakṛt* ||

कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in action अकर्म *akarma* inaction यः *yaḥ* who पश्येत् *pasyet* would see अकर्मणि *akarmaṇi* in inaction च *ca* and कर्म *karma* action यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* he बुद्धिमान् *buddhimān* wise मनुष्येषु *manuṣyeṣu* in men सः *sah* he युक्तः *yuktaḥ* yogi कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् *kṛtsnakarmakṛt* performer of all actions

**He who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is a yogi and accomplisher of everything. 18**

1. Action is innate in *Prakriti* and inaction in Atman. The former is kinetic and the latter static; one is the becoming and the other the Being; one is the perishable and the other the Imperishable. The ignorant are confused being unable to distinguish between the two. A passenger in a running train mistakes the nearby trees as running in the opposite direction. Here motion is attributed wrongly to the motionless. Action is seen in inaction due to ignorance. A man on the shore mistakes a sailing ship at a distance in the sea as one that stands still. Here inaction is seen in action. Thus it is seen that actions and inactions in nature do not always present themselves in their true perspective. The characteristics of

bined with the grace of the Lord weans him to the right path is also made evident. The commentaries of all the great Acharyas are contained in the careers of these two characters—Sri Krishna and Arjuna. He who diligently inquires into this becomes wise among men; he is verily a yogi; he gains the here and the hereafter.

7. Sri Ramakrishna seemed all inaction externally, but the greatest of all actions, the quest of the Infinite, was going on within. Swami Vivekananda was energy personified and action was his message, but at the core of his heart he was established in Atman designated here as inaction.

The lad holding fast to a pillar spins speedily round it without the fear of falling down. Similarly you fix your mind on God and do the earthly duties as best you can. All good will come out of it.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Does the action in the embodied get terminated at all? The answer comes :—

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥ १९

यस्य सर्वे सम्-आ-रम्भाः काम-सम्-कल्प-वर्जिताः ।
ज्ञान-अग्नि-दह्-त-कर्माणम् तम् आहुः पण्डितम् बुधाः ॥

*yasya sarve samārambhāḥ kāmasaṁkalpavarjitāḥ* ।
*jñānāgnidagdhakarmāṇaṁ tam āhuḥ paṇḍitaṁ budhāḥ* ॥

यस्य *yasya* whose सर्वे *sarve* all समारम्भाः *samārambhāḥ* undertakings कामसङ्कल्पवर्जिताः *kāmasaṁkalpa varjitāḥ* devoid of desire and purposes ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणम् *jñānāgni dagdha karmāṇaṁ* whose actions have been

Karma known as living a righteous life culminates in Self-knowledge. The man of Self-knowledge discharges his earthly duties to the best of his ability. Karma and *Jnana* are complementary to each other.

—Sri Ramanuja

3. What the individual soul views as his personal effort is karma, action. The unfailing Cosmic Function of the Supreme Lord is *Akarma*, inaction.

Man in his ignorance thinks that he is the sole agent of his action. But when he sets aside his egoism and agency and feels that his actions are in reality the doings of the Lord, he is said to see inaction in action. Man is not responsible for what he does in dream; but whatever takes place in that state is also the Lord's doing. With or without the instrumentality of man, the Lord's work goes on perfectly. He who sees this great fact sees the Lord's action in man's inaction too. Such a man gains in wisdom.

—Sri Madhwa

4. The nature of karma is to bind man to the wheel of birth and death. But that karma which is performed without egoism, purely for the glory of the Lord does not bind man. Furthermore it disentangles man from the bondages of his previous karma. To see, therefore, inaction in action is to convert all bondage-creating actions into freedom-creating actions. Work done for the sake of the Lord has this effect.

Desisting from obligatory action, due to laziness or ignorance, is highly harmful New fetters

त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned कर्मफलासङ्गम् *karmaphalāsaṅgaṁ* attachment to the fruits of action नित्यतृप्तः *nityatṛptaḥ* ever content निराश्रयः *nirāśrayaḥ* depending on nothing कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in action अभिप्रवृत्तः *abhipravṛttaḥ* engaged अपि *api* even न *na* not एव *eva* verily किंचित् *kiṁcit* anything करोति *karoti* does सः *saḥ* he

**Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of action, ever content, depending on nothing, though engaged in karma, verily he does not do anything. 20**

What inaction is, is not to be gauged with things and affairs external. It is truly the state of the mind that indicates action and inaction. The postman delivers letters containing happy as well as unhappy tidings which affect the addressees, but not the deliverer. The wise man similarly engages himself in actions which are all according to him adorations of the Lord. He has no desire whatsoever. Unattached that he is, he is ever content. There is no need for him to depend on anybody, great or small. The man with this frame of mind is fixed in inaction.

Spiritual discipline is indispensable for the attainment of Self-knowledge. But the case of men of adamant faith is different; they get at this knowledge very easily.

The Gopis returning home once found no boatman to ferry them across the river Yamuna to Brindavan. The perplexed milkmaids presented their plight to the sage Vyasa who had also arrived there just then with the same intent. "Be not worried on this score; I shall lead you all to the other bank. But give me something first to appease the hunger," said the sage. Cream, butter and condensed milk were offered to him accordingly.

is the embodiment of inaction in action His duty is to drive the chariot With the left hand He wields an iron grip at the reins of the four spirited white horses, ever ready to dash forward His right hand assumes *chinmudra*, the finger pose of imparting wisdom to His dejected devotee, Arjuna While the hands are fully engaged this way, the benign face beams with some other message Calmness reigns supreme on the countenance, indicating that the mind within is firm as a rock Action belongs to *Prakriti* Atman embodied as Sri Krishna is ever established in inaction Poise in the midst of purpose, inaction in action — this inspiring principle gets revealed through Yogeswara

Arjuna, on the other hand, has cast off his bow and arrows He puts on the appearance of inaction, though the fact is otherwise Great commotion goes on within Fear is on one side wrecking his heart Pang is on the other side piercing his body to pieces He who seems to have easily renounced his duty is tortured by the conflict of duty His face indicates the storm within The miserable Arjuna embodies action in inaction

A yogi ought to be in the world but not of the world He keeps his head in solitude and hands in society He works incessantly and enjoys eternal holiday Through His personal life Sri Krishna offers this grand philosophy of action and inaction to the world How the half-educated man errs and deviates from the profound path is demonstrated by Arjuna at the outset But that his earnestness com-

That karma is classified as sin which retards the moral and spiritual growth of man. Sins are all born of desire. A yogi is he who has conquered desire; so he incurs no sin. His body, mind and senses get themselves purified because of desirelessness. Nobody makes exclusive ownership over air so essential to living. Similar is the attitude of the yogi towards all bodily requirements, which he reduces to the bare minimum. He avoids accepting gifts that would put him under obligation. Owning unnecessary things would distract the mind. There is no thought in him of ownership of the few things kept for proper physical sustenance. He who maintains this state of mind is said to have abandoned all possessions. Useful bodily activities take place in him automatically. The consciousness in him is released from the material plane to revel in the glory of Atman. The question of sinning does not arise in this exalted state.

How will bodily sustenance be kept up if no thought be bestowed on material possessions? The answer comes:—

यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥ २२

यदृच्छा-लाभ-सं-तुष्टः द्वन्द्व-अति-इतः वि-मत्सरः ।
समः सिद्धौ अ-सिद्धौ च कृ-त्वा अपि न नि-बध्-यते ॥

*yadṛcchā lābha saṁtuṣṭo dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ* ।
*samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca kṛtvā 'pi na nibadhyate* ॥

यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टः *yadṛcchā lābha saṁtuṣṭaḥ* content with what comes to him without effort द्वन्द्वातीतः *dvand-*

burnt by the fire of knowledge तम् *tam* him आहुः *āhuḥ* call पण्डितम् *panditam* a sage बुधा. *budhāḥ* the wise

**Whose doings are all devoid of design and desire for results, and whose actions are all burnt by the fire of knowledge, him, the sages call wise. 19**

Action actuated by design and desire has the power to bind the doer But if the doer of action assumes the attitude that all actions emanate from Iswara and that whatever takes place through him as a mere instrument, is all the glory of the Lord, he is not bound by action There is neither agency nor egoism in him. As a burnt string may retain its form but is unfit for tying, the doings of the yogi do not bind him. They are all burnt away in the fire of the knowledge that God alone is the real author of all that takes place in the universe. He is called the wise by the sages because of his being endowed with this supreme knowledge.

My Cosmic Mother is the real propeller of everything in the world Beings are all puppets in Her hands The ignorant think that they are the doers

— Sri Ramakrishna

How is the wise man established in inaction in action ? The elucidation comes :—

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥ २०

त्यज्-त्वा कर्म-फल-आ-सङ्गम् नित्य-तृप्त निर्-आ-श्रय ।
कर्मणि अभि-प्र-वृत्-त अपि न एव किम्-चित् करोति स. ॥

*tyaktvā karmaphalāsangam nityatrpto nirāśrayaḥ* ।
*karmany abhipravrtto 'pi nai 'va kimcit karoti saḥ* ॥

*gatasaṅgasya muktasya jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ* ।
*yajñāyā 'carataḥ karma samagraṁ pravilīyate* ॥

गतसङ्गस्य *gatasaṅgasya* one who is devoid of attachment मुक्तस्य *muktasya* of the liberated ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः *jñānāvasthita cetasaḥ* whose mind is established in knowledge यज्ञाय *yajñāya* for sacrifice आचरतः *ācarataḥ* acting कर्म *karma* action समग्रम् *samagraṁ* whole प्रविलीयते *pravilīyate* is dissolved

**Of one unattached, liberated, with mind absorbed in knowledge, performing work for Yajna alone, his entire karma melts away.** 23

Bondage and liberation are born of the attitude of the mind. He performs *Yajna* who engages himself in karma for the glory of God. Any amount of activities cause no harm to the man freed from attachment. All actions melt away even as heaps of salt consigned into the sea get dissolved.

The palms and the knife have to be besmeared with oil before cutting open the jack fruit and removing the pulp. Otherwise the gummy juice in it would stick to the fingers and cause hindrance. In that wise protect yourself with self-knowledge before you seek wealth and other worldly things which would otherwise entangle you.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the *sadhaka* view the worldly life? The clue is given :—

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ २४

ब्रह्म अर्पणम् ब्रह्म हविः ब्रह्म-अग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्म एव तेन गम्-तव्यम् ब्रह्म-कर्म-सम्-आ-धिना ॥

After doing full justice to the dainties, Vyasa stood up and implored. " O Yamuna Devi, if it is a fact that I am fasting today, stop flowing and make way for us to get to the other bank " The river did stop flowing and the group safely walked to the opposite side The Gopis then pleaded with the sage to explain the anomaly in his statement that he fasted while actually he feasted on the delicacies which they had supplied him. Vyasa explained himself "The ceaseless hankering of my heart for Sri Krishna is my spiritual fasting The idea 'I eat' is not allowed to enter the mind Your dishes were all offered as oblation to the Maker presiding over this body."

Maharishi Vyasa's life in conformity with Truth and his faith in the Almighty worked this miracle.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The mental make up of the yogi is further explained :—

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ २१

निर्-आशी यत-चित्त आत्मा त्यज्-त सर्व-परि-ग्रह, ।
शारीरम् केवलम् कर्म कुर्वन् न आप्-नोति किल्बिषम् ॥

*nirāśīr yatacittātmā tyakta sarva parigrahaḥ* ।
*śārīram kevalam karma kurvan nā 'pnoti kilbiṣam* ॥

निराशी *nirāśīḥ* without hope यतचित्तात्मा *yatacittātmā* one with the mind and self controlled त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रह *tyakta sarva parigrahaḥ* having abandoned all possessions शारीरम् *śārīram* bodily केवलम् *kevalam* merely कर्म *karma* action कुर्वन् *kurvan* doing न *na* not आप्नोति *āpnoti* obtains किल्बिषम् *kilbiṣam* sin

**Hoping for naught, his mind and self controlled, having abandoned all possessions, performing karma by the body alone, he incurs no sin.** **21**

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।
ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥ २५

दैवम् एव अपरे यज्ञम् योगिनः परि-उप-आसते ।
ब्रह्म-अग्नौ अपरे यज्ञम् यज्ञेन एव उप-जुह्वति ॥

*daivam evā 'pare yajñaṁ yoginaḥ paryupāsate |*
*brahmāgnāv apare yajñaṁ yajñenai 'vo 'pajuhvati ||*

दैवम् *daivaṁ* pertaining to Devas एव *eva* only अपरे *apare* some यज्ञम् *yajñaṁ* sacrifice योगिनः *yoginaḥ* yogis पर्युपासते *paryupāsate* perform ब्रह्माग्नौ *brahmāgnau* in the fire of Brahman अपरे *apare* others यज्ञम् *yajñaṁ* sacrifice यज्ञेन *yajñena* by sacrifice एव *eva* verily उपजुह्वति *upajuhvati* offer as sacrifice

**Some yogis perform sacrifices to Devas alone, while others offer the self as sacrifice by the self verily in the fire of Brahman.** **25**

The Devas and Devis such as Ganesa, Subrahmanya, Ganga, Parvati, Lakshmi and Saraswati are all facets of Brahman. Sacrifices and adoration done to them with devotion are conducive to spiritual growth. The senses are also called *devas* because of their benign function. Sublimation of the senses is the sacrifice that certain *sadhakas* perform devoutly. *Jivatman* or the individual self is also termed *Yajna*. Sacrifice, therefore, of the self by the self is to dedicate oneself to Iswara. It is surrendering the individual consciousness to the Cosmic Consciousness, even as the river re-enters the sea. Crucifying the ego, the apparent man becoming the real man — these are the other ways of expressing the same spiritual fact. This solemn act is verily *jnana-yajna*.

*ātītaḥ* free from the pairs of opposites विमत्सर: *vimatsaraḥ* free from envy सम: *samaḥ* even minded सिद्धौ *siddhau* in success असिद्धौ *asiddhau* in failure च *ca* and कृत्वा *kṛtvā* acting अपि *api* even न *na* not निबध्यते *nibadhyate* is bound

**Content with what he obtains without effort, free from the pairs of opposites, without envy, balanced in success and failure, though acting he is not bound. 22**

Egoism prompts the action-bound man to exert himself for the procurement of his bodily needs An attitude of this type is born of ignorance But a spiritual aspirant is he who is not obsessed with the thought of bodily sustenance Providence provides for him who is attuned to the Supermundane The aspirant is therefore content with what comes to him unsought Happenings such as success and failure, honour and dishonour are the pairs of opposites He is not affected by any of these happenings Whatever falls to his lot, he accepts as divine dispensation A worldling becomes envious of the prosperity of his neighbour, but the *sadhaka* is free from that canker He is, instead, happy over the prosperity of the world A man of this frame of mind is not bound by karma in the midst of his being tightly engaged in it

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गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ २३

गत-सङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञान-अव-स्थित-चेतस ।
यज्ञाय आ-चरतः कर्म समग्रम् प्र-वि-लीयते ॥

introvertive. The physical life goes on mechanically while the mind revels in the Self within.

In the second type of *Yajna* the senses are made best use of for the adoration of the Almighty. In the fire of the senses, the sense-objects are offered as oblation. Forms perceived by the eyes are beheld as the manifestations of the Lord. Auspicious utterances are sumptuously heard. Sacramental food is partaken of with piety. The smelling of the aroma associated with the worship of the Divine, is felt as a form of holy communion. Garlands of flower and sandal paste that come as grace from the adored Deity, are reverently put on the body. The objects of all the five senses are thus sanctified and made liberal use of. The sensual is in this way transformed into the spiritual; the depraving into divinizing.

Of the two methods, that of the sense-control is negative and sense-sublimation positive. Though they seem antithetical to each other, the result produced by them is the same — purification of the mind. The negative method is given to the daring and advanced few and the positive to the aspiring many.

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।
आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥ २७

सर्वाणि इन्द्रिय-कर्माणि प्राण-कर्माणि च अपरे ।
आत्म-सं-यम-योग-अग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञान-दीपिते ॥

*sarvāṇī 'ndriyakarmāṇi prāṇakarmāṇi cā 'pare |*
*ātmasaṁyama yogāgnau juhvati jñānadīpite ||*

*brahmā 'rpanam brahma havir*
*brahmāgnau brahmanā hutam* ।
*brahmai 'va tena gantavyam*
*brahmakarma samādhinā* ॥

ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman अर्पणम् *arpanam* the oblation ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman हवि *havih* the clarified butter ब्रह्माग्नौ *brahmāgnau* in the fire of Brahman ब्रह्मणा *brahmanā* by Brahman हुतम् *hutam* is offered ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman एव *eva* only तेन *tena* by him गन्तव्यम् *gantavyam* shall be reached ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना *brahma karma samādhinā* by the man who is absorbed in action which is Brahman

**The oblation is Brahman, the clarified butter is Brahman, offered by Brahman in the fire of Brahman; unto Brahman verily he goes who cognizes Brahman alone in his action. 24**

He who holds himself the agent to the performance of a sacrifice cherishes the feeling of distinction between himself, the Deity to be propitiated, the things offered, the medium of the fire and so on. But he who takes to *jnana-yajna*, the process of enlightenment, views all these as Brahman, the Thing-in-Itself.

Consuming the daily food regularly is obligatory on all including the enlightened; but the latter convert eating itself into *jnana-yajna*. The food, the eater of it, the digestion—all these are mere modifications of Brahman even as the waves are of the sea. The one established in *brahmāvastha* in this wise attains Brahman.

*dravyayajñās tapoyajñā yogayajñās tathā 'pare* ।
*svādhyāya jñānayajñāś ca yatayaḥ saṁśita vratāḥ* ॥

द्रव्ययज्ञाः *dravya yajñāḥ* those who offer wealth as sacrifice तपोयज्ञाः *tapo yajñāḥ* those who offer austerity as sacrifice योगयज्ञाः *yoga yajñāḥ* those who offer yoga as sacrifice तथा *tathā* again अपरे *apare* others स्वाध्याय ज्ञानयज्ञाः *svādhyāya jñāna yajñāḥ* those who offer study and knowledge as sacrifice च *ca* and यतयः *yatayaḥ* ascetics or anchorites (persons of self-restraint) संशितव्रताः *saṁśita vratāḥ* persons of rigid vows

**Yet others offer wealth, austerity and yoga as sacrifice, while still others, of self-denial and extreme vows, offer sacred study and knowledge as sacrifice. 28**

There are other forms of *Yajna* suited to the *sadhaka's* disposition and desert. Acquiring wealth by honest means and utilizing it for the public weal, is a form of *Yajna*. The scrap iron is melted and recast anew. Similarly man reforms himself through austerity or self-purgation. This is another form of *Yajna*. Constant practice of Rajayoga or Ashtanga yoga constitutes the *Yajna* of yet others. Sacred study is superior to secular study. It requires a good deal of self-preparation. Being established in wholesome habits is the result of extreme vows. Through devoted study and reverent exposition, the divine knowledge in one increases. This is done as an act of *Yajna* by some. That thing which a man devotedly contributes for the welfare of others multiplies in him. This is the law governing *Yajna*.

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥ २९

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ २६

श्रोत्र-आदीनि इन्द्रियाणि अन्ये स यम अग्निषु जु ह्वति ।
शब्द-आदीन् विषयान् अन्ये इन्द्रिय अग्निषु जु ह्वति ॥

*śrotrādinī 'ndriyāny anye samyamāgnişu juhvati* ।
*śabdādīn visayān anya indriyāgnisu juhvati* ॥

श्रोत्रादीनि इन्द्रियाणि *śrotrādini indriyāni* organ of hearing and other senses अन्ये *anye* others संयमाग्निषु *samyamāgnisu* in the fire of restraint जुह्वति *juhvati* sacrifice शब्दादीन्विषयान् *śabdādin visayan* sense objects such as sound, etc , अन्ये *anye* others इन्द्रियाग्निषु *indriyāg-nisu* in the fire of the senses जुह्वति *juhvati* sacrifice

**Some offer hearing and other senses as sacrifice in the fire of restraint, while others offer sound and other sense-objects as sacrifice in the fire of the senses. 26**

Two diametrically opposite types of *Yajna* are enunciated here The function of the one is to make the senses ineffective and that of the other to make them super-effective

Fire which transforms the nature of things consigned into it is the medium in ritualistic *Yajna* and symbol in *jnana-yajna* The fire of restraint carried to its extreme becomes total sense-control The performer of this form of *Yajna* eats wholesome food merely for the nourishment of the body, the act of relishing and the idea of enjoying a meal are all eliminated The other senses are suspended except for the bare maintenance of the body The mind is completely withdrawn from the senses and made

ing the breath within or without is *kumbhaka*. Violent and incorrect practice of *prāṇāyāma* shatters the nerves and brings in neural complications. Correct practice of it heals diseases, tones the system, enhances health and pacifies the mind. Attractive and inviting as this science is, adepts in it are few and quacks many. A novice will therefore do well to refrain from it.

A yogi endowed with a serene mind may practise deep rhythmic breathing avoiding *kumbhaka* as far as possible. A good walker takes no note of his legs. Similarly a *sadhaka* who does good *prāṇāyāma* is hardly ever obsessed with it. Measured breathing and a blissful attitude constitute a good *prāṇāyāma*.

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥ ३०

अपरे नियम्-त-आ-हाराः प्राणान् प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।
सर्वे अपि एते यज्ञ-विदः यज्ञ-क्षपित-कल्मषाः ॥

*apare niyatāhārāḥ prāṇān prāṇeṣu juhvati* ।
*sarve 'py ete yajñavido yajñakṣapita kalmaṣāḥ* ॥

अपरे *apare* other persons नियताहाराः *niyatāhārāḥ* of regulated food प्राणान् *prāṇān* life-breaths प्राणेषु *prāṇeṣu* in the life-breaths जुह्वति *juhvati* sacrifice सर्वे *sarve* all अपि *api* also एते *ete* these यज्ञविदः *yajñavidaḥ* knowers of sacrifice यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः *yajña kṣapita kalmaṣāḥ* whose sins are destroyed by sacrifice

**Still others of regulated food habit offer in the pranas the functions thereof. All these are knowers of Yajna, having their sins destroyed by Yajna. 30**

सर्वाणि *sarvāni* all इन्द्रियकर्माणि *indriyakarmāni* functions of the senses प्राणकर्माणि *prānakarmāni* functions of the breath (vital energy) च *ca* and अपरे *apare* others आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ *ātmasamyama yogāgnau* in the fire of the yoga of self-restraint जुह्वति *juhvati* sacrifice ज्ञान दीपिते *jñāna dīpite* kindled by knowledge

**Others again offer all the actions of the senses and the functions of the life-energy, as a sacrifice in the fire of self-control, kindled by knowledge. 27**

The category of mind is a combination of the sentient and insentient Its function is very much like that of a piece of charcoal which when put into fire becomes ember and charcoal again when extinguished Mind creates the link between the self within and the objects outside When mind is suspended in wakefulness as it does involuntarily in sound sleep, the objective world experienced by it gets negated, when mind gets identified with Atman, like live charcoal, it assumes the characteristics of Atman This identification of the mind with Atman is here referred to as the fire of self-control This act is a great and rare sacrifice When the mind gets merged in Atman, all the actions of the senses and life-energy automatically become sanctified The performer of this *Yajna* becomes Brahman

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥ २८

द्रव्य-यज्ञा तप -यज्ञा योग-यज्ञा तथा अपरे ।
स्व-अध्याय-ज्ञान यज्ञा च यम् तय सं-शित-व्रता ॥

*ayajñasya* of the non-sacrificer कुत: *kutaḥ* how अन्य: *anyaḥ* other कुरुसत्तम *kuru sattama* O best of the Kurus

**The eaters of the nectar, the remnant of Yajna go to the Eternal Brahman. This world is not for the non-sacrificer, how then the other, O best of the Kurus? 31**

Whatever a man does must be conducive to the common welfare. The food consumed by him becomes nectar to the extent he relegates selfishness. Every act of self-denial aids man take a step towards perfection. And self-annihilation is the godliest of all of his endeavours. When the man in an individual is crucified, the divine in him manifests itself. He who offers his *jivahood* as oblation regains Brahmanhood, his Original State. There is no gain superior to the gain of Eternal Brahman.

When the very Highest can be gained by the performance of *Yajna*, the gaining of the lower things by this means would undoubtedly be easy. This earthy possession is verily the easiest for man to procure. But even this is not obtainable to him who fails to perform *Yajna*. The self-seeking man shrinks; he thrives nowhere; and the world views him with disdain. The attainment of heaven which is superior is beside the point to such a man.

What should the progressive man do then? The announcement comes:—

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।
कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ ३२

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।
प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥

अप-अने जुह्वति प्र-अनम् प्राणे अपानम् तथा अपरे ।
प्राण-अपान-गती रुध्-त्वा प्राण-आयाम-पर-अयनाः ॥

*apāne juhvati prāṇam prāṇe 'pānam tathā 'pare |*
*prāṇāpānagatī ruddhvā prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ ||*

अपाने *apāne* in the incoming breath जुह्वति *juhvati* sacrifice प्राणम् *prāṇam* outgoing breath प्राणे *prāṇe* in the outgoing breath अपानम् *apānam* incoming breath तथा *tathā* thus अपरे *apare* others प्राणापानगती *prāṇāpānagatī* courses of the outgoing and incoming breaths रुद्ध्वा *ruddhvā* restraining प्राणायामपरायणाः *pranāyāma parāyaṇāḥ* solely absorbed in the restraint of breath

**Yet others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming, and the incoming in the outgoing, restraining the flow of the outgoing and incoming breaths, solely absorbed in the regulation of the life-energy.** **29**

There is close relationship between man's mentation and his breathing. The regularity or otherwise in the one has a corresponding effect on the other. Unwholesome mentations such as fear, lust and anger disturb and hinder the flow of breath. Calmness, contentment, affection and such like healthy attitudes lead to rhythm in breathing. Conversely, if the flow of breath be voluntarily regulated, its effect on mind is beneficial. Yogis took note of this fact and evolved the science of *prāṇāyāma*.

Breathing through the mouth is to be avoided. Air taken in through the nostril is known as *apāna* and that thrown out, as *prāṇa*. Inhaling is technically called *pūraka;* and exhaling, *rechaka*. Arrest-

*śreyān dravyamayād yajñāj jñānayajñaḥ paraṁtapa* ।
*sarvaṁ karmā 'khilaṁ pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate* ॥

श्रेयान् *śreyān* superior द्रव्यमयात् *dravyamayāt* with objects यज्ञात् *yajñāt* than sacrifice ज्ञान यज्ञः *jñāna yajñaḥ* knowledge sacrifice परंतप *paraṁtapa* O Parantapa सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all कर्म *karma* action अखिलम् *akhilaṁ* in its entirety पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha ज्ञाने *jñāne* in knowledge परिसमाप्यते *parisamāpyate* is culminated

**Knowledge-sacrifice, O Scorcher of foes, is superior to wealth-sacrifice. All karma in its entirety, O Partha, culminates in knowledge.** **33**

Man lives to add more and yet more to his wisdom, and not to multiply his material possessions beyond proportion. Things material cannot be made more use of than the requirement. Over-possession fosters care and anxiety. He who gives himself over too much to mammon pays the penalty in the form of being lop-sided or stunted in intelligence. The man becomes earth-bound beyond redemption. Knowledge, on the other hand, develops into wisdom. It embellishes the personality, aids one to discern between the self and the non-self and leads man into enlightenment and liberation.

Magnificent temples attendant with elaborate and awe-inspiring ritualistic worship serve more to make man earthy than enlightened, more superstitious than spiritual, more drawn to the priests than to the prophets. A neat little sanctuary, on the other hand, serving as a symbol of the human tabernacle, takes man more effectively Godward. It tends toward *jnana-yajna*. The feeling that the

Partaking of wholesome food in a regulated manner is in itself an aspect of yoga It is like tuning the vina, in order to bring out the best music from it

The modern medical world knows how to transfer warm and fresh blood from one body to another requiring to be revitalized Eating and digesting is the natural way of vitalizing the body One conserves life energy in oneself only by appropriating it from another life unit Life lives on life He, who is exclusively attached to his personal life is therefore a sinner Performance of *Yajna* is the only way of redeeming oneself from sin The individual life is dedicated to the service of the Cosmic Life, manifesting Itself as millions of beings This is what is meant by offering the functions of *prāṇās* in the *prāṇās* themselves They who live for the common weal incur no sin

The way of obtaining the Supreme is explained now —

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥ ३१

यज्ञ-शिष्ट अमृत-भुज यान्ति ब्रह्म सना-तनम ।
न अयम् लोक अस्ति अ-यज्ञस्य कुत अन्यः कुरु-सद्-तम ॥

*yajñaśiṣṭāmṛta bhujo yānti brahma sanātanam* ।
*nā 'yam loko 'sty ayajñasya kuto 'nyaḥ kurusattama* ॥

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुज *yajña śiṣṭāmṛta bhujaḥ* eaters of the nectar—the remnant of the sacrifice यान्ति *yānti* go ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman सनातनम् *sanātanam* eternal न *na* not अयम् *ayam* this लोक *lokaḥ* world अस्ति *asti* is अयज्ञस्य

A commercial attitude may be paying elsewhere but never in the realm of the knowledge divine. Even the secular study gets sanctified if the relationship between the teacher and the taught be wholesome. But the bond between the two in spiritual enlightenment is ever sacred. The disciple prostrates before the master as a mark of making himself over to the other. He adds to his attainments by raising submissive questions pertaining to the real and the non-real, bondage and freedom. Through a reverent personal service he offers himself as oblation in the sacrificial fire of the personality of the master. The body, speech and mind of the disciple are this way dedicated to the bestower of knowledge.

The master in his turn is all mercy to the disciple. He has no motive other than propagation of spirituality. As a burning lamp lights another, an enlightened soul alone can carry light to another competent enquirer. Spiritual fulfilment takes place this wise.

Of what avail are prayer and devotion to an aspirant who views his master as a mere human being? The disciple ought not to hold the master as a man. Before getting the vision of the Deity, the novice sees the form of the *guru* as a preliminary. This form metamorphoses into the Deity. The disciple thereby understands that God and *guru* are one and the same. The master awakens the spiritual consciousness in him. More than that, he leads the initiated into Brahman Itself.

If the aspirant is earnest about spiritual enlightenment, the Lord sees to it that he comes in contact with an enlightened one. Seek and the light is sent to you.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

एवम् बहु-विधा यज्ञा वि-तन्-ता ब्रह्मण मुखे ।
कर्म-जान् विद् हि तान् सर्वान् एवम् ज्ञा त्वा वि मोक्ष्यसे ॥

*evam bahuvidhā yajñā vitatā brahmano mukhe* |
*karmajān viddhi tān sarvān evam jñātvā vimoksyase* ||

एवम् *evam* thus बहुविधा *bahuvidhāḥ* manifold यज्ञाः *yajñāḥ* sacrifice वितता *vitatā* are spread ब्रह्मण *brahmanaḥ* of Brahman (or Veda) मुखे *mukhe* in the face कर्मजान् *karmajān* born of action विद्धि *viddhi* know (thou) तान् *tān* them सर्वान् *sarvān* all एवम् *evam* thus ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known विमोक्ष्यसे *vimokṣyase* thou shalt be liberated

**Various Yajnas such as these are spread out in the storehouse of the Vedas. Know them all to be born of karma; and thus knowing you shall be free. 32**

The four-faced Brahma, Veda, *Prakriti*, Nature, phenomenon, *maya*—all these terms refer to the same reality The knower of Veda is he who knows how Nature functions Nature is the embodiment of karma And there is in it a divine design of karma. They who convert karma into *Yajna* construe and conform to the sacred plan of Nature All the happenings in Nature are capable of being converted into *Yajna* While karma in its ordinary form is binding, in the form of *Yajna* it is liberating

How does liberation ensue? The clarification comes .—

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३

श्रेयान् द्रव्य-मयात् यज्ञात् ज्ञान-यज्ञ परम्-तप ।
सर्वम् कर्म अ-खिलम् पार्थ ज्ञाने परि-सम्-आप्-य-ते ॥

The means to transcend the evil of the many is now delineated :—

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥ ३६

अपि चेत् असि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पाप-कृत्-तमः ।
सर्वम् ज्ञान-प्लवेन एव वृजिनम् सम्-तरिष्यसि ॥

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpakṛttamaḥ* ।
*sarvaṁ jñāna plavenai 'va vṛjinaṁ saṁtariṣyasi* ॥

अपि *api* even चेत् *cet* if असि *asi* (thou) art पापेभ्यः *pāpebhyaḥ* than sinners सर्वेभ्यः *sarvebhyaḥ* (than) all पापकृत्तमः *pāpakṛttamaḥ* most sinful सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all ज्ञानप्लवेन *jñāna plavena* by the raft of knowledge एव *eva* alone वृजिनम् *vṛjinaṁ* sin संतरिष्यसि *saṁtariṣyasi* (thou) shalt cross

**Even if you be the most sinful of all sinners, yet shall you cross over all sin by the raft of knowledge.36**

Sin and virtue are the obverse and reverse of the same fact which is karma. According to the use made of it, the same karma presents itself as sin or virtue. The ignorant do karma so as to get entangled in it as sin. The enlightened do the same karma to reap merit and also to be emancipated from it. Knowledge therefore is the only means to absolve all sin. As the unfordable river is crossed over by a raft, the meshes of karma are got over by knowledge.

How does *Jnana* do away with karma? It is explained :—

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥ ३७

mind has to be kept as fresh and pure as a flower is more conducive to spiritual growth and enlightenment than offering a heap of it on the altar. The knowing man has less of the problems of life than the ignorant one. It is knowledge to intuit that one is Atman and not body. *In that knowledge the karma* of that individual gets absolved.

He is truly a man who has made money his slave, he is not fit to be called a man who does not know how to make use of money.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What other attitude aids the growth of knowledge and wisdom? The answer comes :—

**The Supremacy of Knowledge — 34-39**

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४

तत् विद्धि प्र-नि-पातेन परि-प्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उप-देक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानम् ज्ञानिन तद्-त्व-दर्शिन. ॥

*tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā* ।
*upadekṣyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva darśinaḥ* ॥

तत् *tat* that विद्धि *viddhi* know प्रणिपातेन *praṇipātena* by long prostration परिप्रश्नेन *paripraśnena* by question सेवया *sevayā* by service उपदेक्ष्यन्ति *upadekṣyanti* will instruct ते *te* thee ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge ज्ञानिनः *jñāninaḥ* the wise तत्त्वदर्शिन *tattva darśinaḥ* those who have realized the Truth

**Seek that enlightenment by prostrating, by questions and by service; the wise, the seers into the Truth will instruct you in that knowledge.** **34**

न *na* not हि *hi* verily ज्ञानेन *jñānena* to wisdom सदृशम् *sadṛśaṁ* like पवित्रम् *pavitraṁ* pure इह *iha* here (in this world) विद्यते *vidyate* is तत् *tat* that स्वयम् *svayaṁ* oneself योगसंसिद्धः *yoga saṁsiddhaḥ* perfected in yoga कालेन *kālena* in time आत्मनि *ātmani* in the self विन्दति *vindati* finds

**Verily there is no purifier in this world like knowledge. He that is perfected in yoga realizes it in his own heart in due time. 38**

A man dreams that he is being tortured to death. All remedial measures adopted in that dream are of no avail to the victim. The dream requires to be snapped and the man brought to wakefulness. This done he clarifies to himself that nobody subjected him to torture and that his agony was his own creation. Wakeful state here is the purifier of the self-imposed ignorance in dream. Likewise, Self-knowledge cleanses man of the delusion of birth and death. It reinstates him in his original blessedness. Knowledge is, therefore, the best among the purifiers of man. The proper practice of karma yoga transforms the life of the yogi into *jnana-yajna.* His mind thereby gets purified and he becomes competent in course of time for Self-knowledge.

The baby takes ten months for its development in the womb. Similarly is there any time limit for the attainment of *Jnana?* The explanation comes :—

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ३९

What is the hallmark of enlightenment? The answer comes —

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेव यास्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ ३५

यत् ज्ञा त्वा न पुन मोहम् एवम् या स्यसि पाण्डव ।
येन भूतानि अ-शषेण द्रक्ष्यसि आत्मनि अथो मयि ॥

*yaj jñātvā na punar moham evam yāsyasi pāndava |*
*yena bhūtāny aśesena draksyasy ātmany atho mayi ||*

यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known न *na* not पुन *punah* again मोहम् *moham* delusion एवम् *evam* thus यास्यसि *yāsyasi* will get पाण्डव *pāndava* O Pandava येन *yena* by this भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings अशेषेण *aśesena* all द्रक्ष्यसि *draksyasi* (thou) see आत्मनि *ātmani* in (thy) self अथो *atho* also मयि *mayi* in Me

**Knowing this, O Pandava, you will not again fall into this confusion; by this you will see the whole of the creation in your self and in Me. 35**

Two apparently opposing detachments encountered each other at midnight and lay in ambush to deal on the enemy a decisive blow at daybreak But to the surprise of both, they discovered in the morning that they belonged to the same army Their attitude and action changed accordingly The world is viewed by the ignorant as made up of conflicting forces But with the dawn of enlightenment all diversities disappear One Reality is presenting Itself as the many

Knowledge leads to unity ignorance to diversity

— Sri Ramakrishna

a while. He was then asked how he felt. "I thought I would die for want of air to breathe," came the answer. "Such a quest of God would reveal Him immediately," was the answer given by the master.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Doubt is Derogatory — 40-42

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ ४०

अ-ज्ञः च अ-श्रद्दधानः च संशय-आत्मा वि-नश्यति ।
न अयम् लोकः अस्ति न परः न सुखम् संशय-आत्मनः ॥

*ajñaś cā 'śraddadhānaś ca saṁśayātmā vinaśyati |*
*nā 'yaṁ loko 'sti na paro na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ* ||

अज्ञः *ajñaḥ* the ignorant च *ca* and अश्रद्दधानः *aśraddadhānaḥ* the faithless च *ca* and संशयात्मा *saṁśayātmā* the doubting self विनश्यति *vinaśyati* goes to destruction न *na* not अयम् *ayaṁ* this लोकः *lokaḥ* world अस्ति *asti* is न *na* not परः *paraḥ* the next न *na* not सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness संशयात्मनः *saṁśayātmanaḥ* for the doubting self

**The ignorant, the man devoid of sraddha, the doubting self, goes to destruction. The doubting self has neither this world, nor the next, nor happiness. 40**

Ignorant is that man who is uninformed about Atman. Divine qualities such as self-confidence and noble effort are all born of *sraddha;* but doubt is the very negation of these great qualities. The doubting man does not trust anybody in the world. He suspects the words and deeds of the others. Through disbelief he alienates himself from the others and feels miserable. For want of faith in the right path he fails to pursue it and brings ruin to himself.

यथा एधांसि समृ-इद्ध अग्नि भस्म सात् कुरुते अर्जुन ।
ज्ञान-अग्नि सर्व-कर्माणि भस्म सात् कुरुते तथा ॥

*yathai 'dhāmsi samiddho 'gnir bhasmasāt kurute'rjuna* |
*jñānāgnih sarva karmāni bhasmasāt kurute tathā* ||

यथा *yathā* as एधांसि *edhāmsi* fuel समिद्ध *samiddhah* blazing अग्नि *agnih* fire भस्मसात् *bhasmasāt* reduced to ashes कुरुते *kurute* makes अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna ज्ञानाग्नि *jñānāgnih* fire of knowledge सर्वकर्माणि *sarva karmāni* all actions भस्मसात् *bhasmasāt* to ashes कुरुते *kurute* makes तथा *tathā* so

**As the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all karma to ashes.** **37**

While in ignorance the *Jivatman* shares in karma in all its three forms–*samchita*, *āgāmin* and *prārabdha* Of these three, the first remains stored up to bear fruit in the distant future and the second in the near future The third is working itself out in the present body The fire of knowledge destroys the first two and renders the third ineffective though operating The *Jnani* pays no more heed to it than he does to the shadow of his body

The solemnity that self-knowledge brings can never be over-emphasized —

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥ ३८

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशम् पवित्रम् इह विद्-यते ।
तत् स्वयम् योग-सम्-सिद्ध कालेन आत्मनि विन्दति ॥

*na hi jñānena sadrśam pavitram iha vidyate* |
*tat svayam yogasamsiddhah kālenā 'tmani vindati* ||

He who understands this does not fall prey to doubt, but applies himself with all earnestness to self-fulfilment in tune with the cosmic plan. This wholesome attitude and right application develop into enlightenment. The enlightened man, ever established in the Self, neither shuns work nor is entangled in it. In freedom he works.

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥ ४२

तस्मात् अ-ज्ञान-सम्-भू-तम् हृद्-स्थम् ज्ञान-असिना आत्मनः ।
छिद्-त्वा एनम् सं-शयम् योगम् आ-तिष्ठ उद्-तिष्ठ भारत ॥

*tasmād ajñānasaṁbhūtaṁ hṛtsthaṁ jñānāsinā 'tmanaḥ*
*chittvai 'naṁ saṁśayaṁ yogam ātiṣṭho 'ttiṣṭha bhārata*

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore अज्ञानसंभूतम् *ajñānasaṁbhūtaṁ* born out of ignorance हृत्स्थम् *hṛtsthaṁ* residing in the heart ज्ञानासिना *jñānāsinā* by the sword of knowledge आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the Self छित्त्वा *chittvā* having cut एनम् *enaṁ* this संशयम् *saṁśayaṁ* doubt योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga आतिष्ठ *ātiṣṭha* take refuge उत्तिष्ठ *uttiṣṭha* arise भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**Therefore, severing with the sword of knowledge this ignorance-born doubt about the Self, dwelling in your heart, be established in yoga. Stand up, O Bharata. 42**

Doubt is the originator of all evils. It takes its stand on ignorance. In the night of ignorance, things cannot be viewed in their true perspective. Therefore understanding remains in a confused state. Ignorance and inertia are interrelated. The urge to be up and doing is absent in this drowsy

श्रद्धा-वान् लभते ज्ञानम् तद्-परः सम्-यम् त-इन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानम् लब्-ध्वा पराम् शान्तिम् अ चिरेण अधि-गच्छति ॥

*śraddhāvāml labhate jñānam tatparah samyatendriyah* |
*jñānam labdhvā parām śāntim acirenā 'dhigacchati* ||

श्रद्धावान् *śraddhāvān* the man of faith लभते *labhate* obtains ज्ञानं *jñānam* knowledge तत्परः *tatparah* devoted संयतेन्द्रियः *samyatendriyah* who has subdued the senses ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge लब्ध्वा *labdhvā* having obtained पराम् *parām* supreme शान्तिम् *śāntim* to peace अचिरेण *acirena* at once अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* goes

**The man of sraddha, the devoted, the master of his senses obtains knowledge. Having obtained *knowledge he goes promptly to the Peace Supreme.* 39**

In the midst of the devotion to the preceptor, whole-hearted service to him and searching inquiries into the nature of the real and non-real, the disciple may not be making rapid progress, due to lack of adequate zeal, the criterion for spirituality To the extent *sraddha* or zeal beams in one, progress is made in the path of knowledge. One is said to be devoted when one's mind is given wholly to the Ideal. Perfect mastery over the senses is a prerequisite to the development of intuition. Variance in the fulfilment of these conditions leads to quick or slow gain of knowledge. The time factor for it varies from a trice to the duration of several births. Along with the gain of *Brahma-jnana* comes Peace that cannot be described.

"When will I have the vision of God?" asked an ardent disciple of the master. Instead of giving a direct answer he took the novice to the sea shore and held him immersed in water for

# संन्यासयोगः

## SANYASA YOGA

## CHAPTER V

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa—Karma Pertains to Prakriti and not Purusha—Same-sightedness Ensues from Knowledge—Bliss of Brahman Different from Sense-pleasure.

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa — I-13

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ १

सम्-नि-आसम् कर्मणाम् कृष्ण पुनः योगम् च शंम्-असि ।
यत् श्रेयः एतयोः एकम् तत् मे ब्रूहि सु-निः चितम् ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*saṁnyāsaṁ karmaṇāṁ kṛṣṇa punar yogaṁ ca śaṁsasi* ।
*yac chreya etayor ekaṁ tan me brūhi suniścitam* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

संन्यासम् *saṁnyāsaṁ* renunciation कर्मणाम् *karmaṇāṁ* of actions कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna पुनः *punaḥ* again योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga च *ca* and शंससि *śaṁsasi* (thou) praisest यत् *yat* which श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* better एतयोः *etayoḥ* of these two एकम् *ekaṁ* one तत् *tat* that मे *me* to me ब्रूहि *brūhi* tell सुनिश्चितम् *suniścitaṁ* conclusively

**Arjuna said:**

**Renunciation of action, O Krishna, you commend, and again its performance. Of the two, which one is the better? Tell me that conclusively. 1**

In Chapter IV verses 18, 19, 21, 24, 32, 33, 37 and 41 the Lord advocated the renunciation of action. But in the last verse of the same chapter he com-

Fallen as he is, he neither enjoys this world nor is he fit for the next

Unless one has the faith of a baby one cannot have access to the Lord If mother points to somebody and says, ' He is your brother," the baby believes it The grace of the Lord comes to him who has this kind of faith The calculative and doubtful estrange themselves from the Divine

— Sri Ramakrishna

The way to cure oneself of doubt is as follows —

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माण ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥ ४१

योग-सम्-नि अस्-त-कर्माणम् ज्ञान-सम्-छिन्न संशयम् ।
आत्म-वन्तम् न कर्माणि नि-बध्नन्ति धनम् जय ॥

*yogasamnyastakarmānam jñānasamchinnasamśayam* ।
*ātmavantam na karmāni nibadhnanti dhanamjaya* ॥

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणम् *yoga samnyasta karmānam* one who has renounced actions by yoga ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् *jñāna samchinna samśayam* one whose doubts are rent asunder by knowledge आत्मवन्तम् *ātmavantam* possessing the self न *na* not कर्माणि *karmāni* actions निबध्नन्ति *nibadhnanti* bind धनंजय *dhanamjaya* O Dhananjaya

**With work absolved in yoga, and doubts rent asunder by knowledge, O Dhananjaya, actions do not bind him who is poised in the Self. 41**

The mud fish remains untarnished by mud, though wallowing in it all the while A yogi is he who is not tainted by karma though ever occupied with it Nature is infallible There is a divine plan and purpose in its functioning It trains and disciplines the *Jivatman* stage by stage to perfection

experience and the fruitful contact with people that it brings. Karma yoga is akin to walking to Badrikashrama, while karma sanyasa is like reaching that place by plane. Through the karma yoga method wide experience is gained, the divine possibilities in the human is being processed to perfection and benign communion with the Lord's creation is established. These great purposes of life are denied to karma sanyasa.

The inexperienced player at a game of dice wants somehow to score a victory and he is intent on it. But an adept in it takes to the display of his talents first and attends to the gain next. *Sadhakas* who want to escape from the turmoils of the world are second to those who serve the world but are not bound by it.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

*Karma sanyasa* too has its own reward. Blessings such as quietude and tranquillity ensue from it. Action, on the other hand, necessarily means disturbance of equilibrium. Objections to this effect may be raised; but they are met as follows :—

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३

ज्ञेयः सः नित्य-सम्-न्यासी यः न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।
निर्-द्वन्द्वः हि महा-बाहो सुखम् बन्धात् प्र-मुच्यते ॥

*jñeyaḥ sa nityasaṁnyāsī yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati* ।
*nirdvandvo hi mahābāho sukhaṁ bandhāt pramucyate*॥

ज्ञेयः *jñeyaḥ* should be known सः *saḥ* he नित्यसंन्यासी *nitya saṁnyāsī* steady ascetic यः *yaḥ* who न *na* not द्वेष्टि *dveṣṭi* hates न *na* not काङ्क्षति *kāṅkṣati* desires निर्द्वन्द्वः *nirdvandvaḥ* one free from the pairs of opposites

state But at daybreak sleep is shaken off, things are seen in their true shape and the man goes about his work with all zeal The dawn of knowledge is similar to this It drives away the soul-killing doubt Knowing and doing go hand in hand, and the man is at his best

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानकर्म संन्यासयोगो नाम
चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpanisatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde jñānakarma samnyāsa yogo nāma caturtho 'dhyāyah* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fourth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION IN KNOWLEDGE

सांख्ययोगौ *saṁkhyayogau* saṁkhya (knowledge) and yoga (yoga of action or performance of action) पृथक् *pṛthak* distinct बालाः *bālāḥ* children प्रवदन्ति *pravadanti* speak न *na* not पण्डिताः *paṇḍitāḥ* the wise एकम् *ekaṁ* one अपि *api* even आस्थितः *āsthitaḥ* established in सम्यक् *samyak* truly उभयोः *ubhayoḥ* of both विन्दते *vindate* obtains फलम् *phalaṁ* fruit

**Children, not the wise, speak of knowledge and performance of action as different; he who is truly established in one obtains the fruit of both. 4**

*Karma sanyasa* which culminates in *jnana* is described here as *saṁkhya.* Those who do not understand the purport of the Scripture are designated as children. Theory and practice are interrelated and interdependent. Right understanding leads to right doing; right doing brings in right knowing.

The truth is this :—

यत्साङ्ख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।
एकं साङ्ख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५

यत् सांख्यैः प्र-आप्-यते स्थानम् तत् योगैः अपि गम्-यते ।
एकम् सांख्यम् च योगम् च यः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥

*yat sāṁkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānaṁ*
*tad yogair api gamyate ।*
*ekaṁ sāṁkhyaṁ ca yogaṁ ca*
*yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati ॥*

यत् *yat* that सांख्यैः *sāṁkhyaiḥ* by the Samkhyas प्राप्यते *prāpyate* is reached स्थानम् *sthānaṁ* place तत् *tat* that योगैः *yogaiḥ* by the yogis (karma yogins) अपि *api* also गम्यते *gamyate* is reached एकम् *ekaṁ* one सांख्यम्

mended the performance of action Two conflicting courses cannot be adopted simultaneously Hence Arjuna raises this doubt

श्री भगवानुवाच

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ २

सम्-न्यास कर्म-योग च नि श्रेयस करौ उभौ ।
तयो तु कर्म-सम् न्यासात् कर्म योग वि शिष्यते ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*samnyāsaḥ karmayogaś ca niḥśreyasakarāv ubhau* ।
*tayos tu karmasamnyāsāt karmayogo viśiṣyate* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said

सन्यास *samnyāsaḥ* renunciation कर्मयोग *karmayogaḥ* yoga of action च *ca* and नि श्रेयसकरौ *niḥśreyasakarau* leading to the highest bliss उभौ *ubhau* both तयो *tayoḥ* of these two तु *tu* but कर्मसन्यासात् *karmasamnyāsāt* than renunciation of action कर्मयोग *karmayogaḥ* yoga of action विशिष्यते *viśiṣyate* is superior

The Blessed Lord said

**Renunciation and performance of action both lead to freedom; of the two, performance of action is superior to the renunciation of action. 2**

*Mukti* or the emancipation of the soul is contained in *Sreyas*, and it is the acme of the human life It can be gained either by the renunciation of action or by its performance The sacred Badrikashrama in the interior of the Himalayas may be reached either by a plane or on foot Of the two, the latter means is preferable because of the wide

*brahma* to Brahman नचिरेण *nacirena* quickly अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* goes

**Sanyasa, O mighty-armed, is hard to attain to without karma yoga; the man of meditation, purified by karma yoga quickly goes to Brahman. 6**

A tender and unripe fruit clings fast to the tree that bears and nourishes it; but when fully ripe it severs connection from its sustainer. Similarly, the karma yogi gets from *Prakriti* the experience that matures into wisdom. He is a philosopher who translates principle into practice. Theorization and make-believe have no place in his spiritual career. By experiment he knows that life in the supersenses is superior to that in the senses. The mind of the unselfish man is more magnanimous than that of the selfish one. Life blossoms better in him who lives for others than in him who lives exclusively for himself. Just as sound sleep is possible only for him who works hard, deep meditation comes to him who has negated his individuality in the service of others. It is self-denial that brings in purification of the heart. The one pure in mind becomes one with Brahman who is all purity. Here karma yoga fruitions in *karma sanyasa.*

The purification of the personality of the yogi takes place in this way :—

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ ७

योग-युक्तः वि-शुद्ध-आत्मा वि-जित-आत्मा जित-इन्द्रियः ।
सर्व-भूत-आत्म-भूत-आत्मा कुर्वन् अपि न लिप्-यते ॥

हि *hi* verily महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed सुखम् *sukham* easily बन्धात् *bandhāt* from bondage प्रमुच्यते *pramucyate* is set free

**He should be known a constant Sanyasin, who neither hates nor desires; free from the pair of opposites, O mighty-armed, he is easily set free from bondage. 3**

It is not *sanyasa* if a man renounces duty due to dislike, neither is it *sanyasa* if he delights in escaping from duty. Selfishness masquerades here as self-denial. Then there is the man who mistakes the inertia in himself for equilibrium. His delight in slothfulness is interpreted as delight in the Self. It is not action but attitude that binds or liberates man. The emptiness of the posed tranquillity gets itself exposed in tribulation. But the karma yogi is proof against imaginary quietude. In the midst of intense activities he is free from likes and dislikes. True tranquillity is therefore tangible in him. While acting he is not the agent; while being in the world, he is not of the world. Therefore the karma yogi alone is the true *karma sanyasi.*

This subtle distinction is further elucidated :—

साङ्ख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥ ४

साङ्ख्य-योगौ पृथक् बालाः प्र-वदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।
एकम् अपि आ-स्थितः सम्यक् उभयोः विन्दते फलम् ॥

*sāmkhyayogau pṛthag bālāḥ pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ* ।
*ekam apy āsthitaḥ samyag ubhayor vindate phalam* ॥

doer of this virtuous act," and "I am the doer of this vicious act." This attitude is the cause of the continuation of the wheel of birth and death. But when one realizes God, one is freed from the feelings of agency and bondage. One remains convinced in the truth that God is the real doer of everything.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The signs of freedom from the bondage of karma are as follows :—

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।
पश्यञ्शृण्वन्स्पृशञ्जिघ्रन्नश्नन्गच्छन्स्वपञ्श्वसन् ॥ ८

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥ ९

न एव किम्-चित् कर्-ओमि इति युज्-तः मन्येत तत्त्व-वित् ।
पश्यन् शृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रन् अश्नन् गच्छन् स्वपन् श्वसन् ॥
प्र-लपन् वि-सृजन् गृह्णन् उद्-मिषन् नि-मिषन् अपि ।
इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रिय-अर्थेषु वर्तन्ते इति धारयन् ॥

*nai 'va kiṁcit karomī 'ti yukto manyeta tattvavit |*
*paśyañ śṛṇvan spṛśañ jighrann aśnan gacchan svapañ śvasan ||*
*pralapan visṛjan gṛhṇann unmiṣan nimiṣann api |*
*indriyāṇī 'ndriyārtheṣu vartanta iti dhārayan ||*

न *na* not एव *eva* even किंचित् *kiṁcit* anything करोमि *karomi* I do इति *iti* thus युक्तः *yuktaḥ* yogi मन्येत *manyeta* thinks तत्त्ववित् *tattvavit* the knower of truth पश्यन् *paśyan* seeing शृण्वन् *śṛṇvan* hearing स्पृशन् *spṛśan* touching जिघ्रन् *jighran* smelling अश्नन् *aśnan* eating गच्छन् *gacchan* going स्वपन् *svapan* sleeping श्वसन् *śvasan* breathing

प्रलपन् *pralapan* speaking विसृजन् *visṛjan* letting go गृह्णन् *gṛhṇan* seizing उन्मिषन् *unmiṣan* opening (the eyes)

*sāmkhyam* the Samkhya (knowledge) च *ca* and योगम् *yogam* yoga (performance of action) च *ca* and य *yaḥ* who पश्यति *paśyati* sees स *saḥ* he पश्यति *paśyati* sees

**The state reached by the Jnanis is also reached by the karma yogis. He sees who sees Jnana and karma-yoga as one.** 5

Knowledge and action are the obverse and reverse of the same spiritually evolving entity The one is not to the exclusion of the other He who knows truly acts rightly He who does things perfectly knows them in their true perspective Know and do, or do and know, are interchangeable The contact with the one side of a coin necessarily leads to the contact with the other side *Jnana* and karma are in this wise two readings of the same spiritual attainment of the *sadhaka* The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman The knowing aspect here is *samkhya* and the becoming aspect, yoga

Of these two paths which is more beneficial? The elucidation comes —

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ६

सम्-नि-आस तु महा बाहो दु खम् आप्तुम् अ-योगत ।
योग-युक्त मुनि ब्रह्म नचिरेण अधि गच्छति ॥

*samnyāsas tu mahābāho duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ* ।
*yogayukto munir brahma nacirenā 'dhigacchati* ॥

सन्यास *samnyāsaḥ* renunciation तु *tu* but महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty armed दु खम् *duḥkham* hard आप्तुम् *āptum* to attain अयोगत *ayogataḥ* without yoga योगयुक्त *yogayuktaḥ* yoga harmonized मुनि *muniḥ* Muni ब्रह्म

What is the relationship between the *Jnani* and the karma that takes place through him ? The clarification comes :—

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ १०

ब्रह्मणि आ-धा-य कर्माणि सङ्गम् त्यज्-त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न सः पापेन पद्म-पत्रम् इव अम्भसा ॥

*brahmaṇy ādhāya karmāṇi saṅgaṁ tyaktvā karoti yaḥ* ।
*lipyate na sa pāpena padma patram ivā 'mbhasā* ॥

ब्रह्मणि *brahmaṇi* in Brahman आधाय *ādhāya* having placed कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions सङ्गम् *saṅgaṁ* attachment त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned करोति *karoti* acts यः *yaḥ* who लिप्यते *lipyate* is tainted न *na* not सः *saḥ* he पापेन *pāpena* by sin पद्मपत्रम् *padma patraṁ* lotus leaf इव *iva* like अंभसा *ambhasā* by water

**He who acts, abandoning attachment, dedicating his deeds to Brahman, is untainted by sin as a lotus leaf by water. 10**

The life, growth and sustenance of the lotus are all dependent on water. It dries away when severed from it. While constantly in touch with it, the lotus leaf does not permit being wetted with water. Man is born with karma and sustained by it. While fully availing himself of it, the yogi does not get affected by it.

How does the yogi avail himself of karma ? It is explained :—

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ ११

*yogayukto viśuddhātmā vijitātmā jitendriyaḥ |*
*sarvabhūtātma bhūtātmā kurvann api na lipyate* ||

योगयुक्त *yogayuktaḥ* devoted to the path of action विशुद्धात्मा *viśuddhātmā* a man of purified mind विजितात्मा *vijitātmā* one who has conquered the self जितेन्द्रिय *jitendriyaḥ* one who has subdued his senses सर्वभूतात्म भूतात्मा *sarvabhutātma bhutātmā* one who realizes his self as the Self in all beings कुर्वन् *kurvan* acting अपि *api* even न *na* not लिप्यते *lipyate* is tainted

**With the mind purified by karma yoga, and the self disciplined, and the senses subdued, one who realizes one's self as the Self in all beings, though acting, is not affected. 7**

There is a contrast between the earth bound man engaging himself in action and the soul liberating karma yogi doing so Bondage increases in the former and diminishes in the latter The action of the yogi not being motivated by any desire, his understanding gets progressively clarified As his desires in all forms get liquidated his self-control tends to perfection The desirelessness in him gets transformed into clarity of understanding This clarity itself ultimately becomes the intuition which cognizes the one Cosmic Consciousness apparently appearing as the multitudinous forms of consciousness Karma yoga itself is *karma sanyasa* because it brings in these successive stages of spiritual enlightenment

An individual has the delusion, 'I am the doer' as long as the philosopher s stone has not converted the base metal of his mind into the noble one of the divine eye When he is in ignorance he entertains the feelings of agency such as 'I am the

*yuktaḥ karmaphalaṁ tyaktvā śāntim āpnoti naiṣṭhikīm* ।
*ayuktaḥ kāmakāreṇa phale sakto nibadhyate* ॥

युक्तः *yuktaḥ* the united one (the well poised) कर्मफलम् *karma phalaṁ* fruit of action त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned शान्तिम् *śāntiṁ* peace आप्नोति *āpnoti* attains नैष्ठिकीम् *naiṣṭhikīṁ* final अयुक्तः *ayuktaḥ* the non-united one कामकारेण *kāmakāreṇa* impelled by desire फले *phale* in the fruit (of action) सक्तः *saktaḥ* attached निबध्यते *nibadhyate* is bound

**Abandoning the fruit of action, the yogi attains peace born of steadfastness; impelled by desire, the non-yogi is bound, attached to fruit. 12**

Performance of karma is common to both, the yogi and the non-yogi. But the difference between the two is in the disposition. The feeling of agency to action is no more in the former. Whatever takes place through his instrumentality is the Lord's work. His steadfastness consists of his mind being released from work and of its being immersed in the Lord. In this state of the mind there is no anxiety; there is calmness instead; the mind gets itself steadily purified. It becomes fit for enlightenment. On the other side, the non-yogi gets entangled in work; anxiety is on the increase in him.

The exuberance of the spiritual mood of the yogi is further elucidated as follows :—

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ १३

सर्व-कर्माणि मनसा सम्-नि-अस्य आस्-ते सुखम् वशी ।
नव-द्वारे पुरे देही न एव कुर्वन् न कारयन् ॥

निमिषन् *nimisan* closing (the eyes) अपि *api* also इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāni* the senses इन्द्रियार्थेषु *indriyārthesu* amongst the sense-objects वर्तन्ते *vartante* move इति *iti* thus धारयन् *dhārayan* being convinced

**The sage centred in the Self should think, "I do nothing at all"—though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, emptying, holding, opening and closing the eyes—firm in the thought that the senses move among sense-objects. 8-9**

All activities pertaining to bodily existence take place in the non-Self The Self is actionless The knower of the Self is therefore free from agency. The person seated in an automobile does not himself move He identifies himself with the moving vehicle and says, "I am going" The person who blurts in sleep is not in reality the agent of that act. A man absorbed in some deep thought is not aware of the taste of the dish he partakes In all these cases the activities are not actually of the persons concerned Similar to these, the *Jnani* established in Atman is not the doer of the activities going on in the body, the senses, mind, intellect and the life-energy called *prāna*

He who comes to know that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord, has no egoistic feeling He is aware that he is only a tool with which God has His work done Such a man causes harm to nobody The poison of egoism is no more in him A steel knife becomes a gold knife with the touch of the philosopher's stone Though the form of the knife is there, it is not useful any more for cutting Similarly the *Jnani* retains a seeming individuality, but no ignorance born activity occurs in and through him —Sri Ramakrishna

enthroned in this citadel the administration of which is carried on by the ministry of egoism, mind, intellect, life-energy and the senses. The reign over the region of the body lasts until the momentum of the *prārabdha karma* gets exhausted. Even while residing in the body, the consciousness of it and domination over its activities is entirely absent in the yogi. Self revelling in Its own glory is the gain that the yogi has.

The yogi holds that all activities belong to Iswara and not to himself. Is Iswara then the real doer of all deeds? The answer comes :—

**Karma Pertains to Prakriti and not Purusha — 14-17**

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४

न कर्तृ-त्वम् न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्म-फल-सम्-योगम् स्वभावः तु प्र-वर्तते ॥

*na kartṛtvaṁ na karmāṇi lokasya sṛjati prabhuḥ* ।
*na karmaphala saṁyogaṁ svabhāvas tu pravartate* ॥

न *na* not कर्तृत्वम् *kartṛtvaṁ* agency न *na* not कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions लोकस्य *lokasya* for this world सृजति *sṛjati* creates प्रभुः *prabhuḥ* the Lord न *na* not कर्मफलसंयोगम् *karmaphala saṁyogaṁ* union with the fruits of actions स्वभावः *svabhāvaḥ* nature तु *tu* but प्रवर्तते *pravartate* leads to action

**The Lord does not create agency or actions for the world; He does not create union with the fruits of action. Nature does all this.** **14**

Due to ignorance the individual self identifies himself with Nature or *Prakriti* and assumes owner-

कायेन मनसा बुद्धया केवलै इन्द्रियै अपि ।
योगिन कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गम् त्यज्-त्वा आत्म-शुद्धये ॥

*kāyena manasā buddhyā*
*kevalaır ındrıyaır apı* ।
*yogınaḥ karma kurvantı*
*sangam tyaktvā 'tmaśuddhaye* ॥

कायेन *kāyena* by the body मनसा *manasā* by the mind बुद्ध्या *buddhyā* by the intellect केवलै *kevalaıh* only इन्द्रियै *ındrıyaıh* by the senses अपि *apı* also योगिनः *yogınah* yogıs कर्म *karma* actıon कुर्वन्ति *kurvantı* perform सङ्गम् *sangam* attachment त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* havıng abandoned आत्मशुद्धये *ātmaśuddhaye* for the purıficatıon of the self

**The yogi, abandoning attachment, performs work wıth the body, the mınd, the intellect and the senses only, for self-purıficatıon. 11**

The motıve-power of desıre creates the evıl of attachment and propels the mınd and the senses on baneful mıssıons When the evıl ıs elımınated the ınstruments become avaılable for the servıce of the dıvıne The more they are engaged on holy purposes the better they get sanctıfied Self-purıficatıon ıs effected thıs way Karma ıs verıly the means to thıs great end

Elucıdatıon through contrast comes as follows —

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२

युक्त कर्म-फलम् त्यज्-त्वा शान्तिम् आप् नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अ-युक्त काम कारेण फले सज्-त नि बध् यते ॥

*Prakriti*, while actually It does not. People who are in ignorance impose the traits of *Prakriti* on Atman and get deluded.

The relationship between *Purusha* and *Prakriti* is very well explained in these two verses. Iswara is Bliss and Perfect Poise. Karma has no place in His Blessedness. *Prakriti* gets itself vitalized in the proximity of *Purusha*. *Jivatman* gets bound when he identifies himself with *Prakriti*; he gets emancipated when he detaches himself from *Prakriti*. And this is the essence of Vedanta.

The burning lamp gives light to one and all, all round it. Some use that light for cooking their food, others for reading sacred books and yet others for forging false documents. The merits and demerits in these several acts do not in any way affect the light coming from the lamp. In this wise the consciousness equally present in all beings makes all sorts of activities possible in them because of Its proximity. The good and bad deeds, however, of beings do not go to the Pure Consciousness, which is Iswara.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

If it is a fact that the Lord does not take note of the good and bad acts of people, why then should they be exhorted to do good and eschew evil? The answer comes :—

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६

ज्ञानेन तु तत् अ-ज्ञानम् येषाम् नाशितम् आत्मनः ।
तेषाम् आदित्य-वत् ज्ञानम् प्र-काशयति तद्-परम् ॥

*jñānena tu tad ajñānaṁ yeṣāṁ nāśitam ātmanaḥ* ।
*teṣām ādityavaj jñānaṁ prakāśayati tat param* ॥

*sarvakarmāni manasā samnyasyā 'ste sukham vaśī* |
*navadvāre pure dehī nai 'va kurvan na kārayan* ||

सर्वकर्माणि *sarva karmāni* all actions मनसा *manasā* by the mind सन्यस्य *samnyasya* having renounced आस्ते *āste* rests सुखम् *sukham* happily वशी *vaśī* the self-controlled नवद्वारे *navadvāre* in the nine-gated पुरे *pure* in the city देही *dehī* the embodied न *na* not एव *eva* even कुर्वन् *kurvan* acting न *na* not कारयन् *kārayan* causing to act

**Having mentally renounced all actions, the self-disciplined indweller rests happily in the city of nine gates, neither acting nor causing to act. 13**

Karma varies in pattern according to the temperamental difference There are also forms of karma distinct in themselves The indispensable one among them is the obligatory work, *nitya karma*, such as eating, sleeping, bathing and praying By doing these acts no new merit is acquired but by failing in them there is a sure set back *Naimitya karma* are special activities that are performed on occasions such as *Sivarātri*, *Ekādasi* and eclipse *Kamya karma* or desire-impelled activities are those performed for certain earthly ends Again, there are the *nishiddha karma*, the prohibited acts that run counter to ethics While the obligatory works alone go on automatically by sheer force of habit, the yogi does not engage himself in any of the other forms of karma This is possible because he is completely rid of egoism and agency

The body with its openings is aptly compared to a city of nine gates Like a monarch, Atman stays

कल्मषाः *jñāna nirdhūta kalmaṣāḥ* those whose sins have been dispelled by knowledge

**Those who think on That, merge in That, get fixed in That, have That as the goal, they attain to non-return, their taints being dispelled by knowledge.**

The sun can never see darkness wherever it may go. It is ever in brilliance. The knower of Brahman has nothing but Brahman to cognize. Distinctions such as inside and outside do not exist for him. One undivided, interminable consciousness is for him. The man of this experience does not take birth again; he attains *mukti*.

Brahman is experienced vaguely through discrimination, somewhat vividly through meditation and in Its Original Splendour in Samadhi.

**— Sri Ramakrishna**

How are we to know of the state of liberation while yet living in the body in the mundane world? The elucidation comes :—

**Same-sightedness Ensues from Knowledge — 18-19**

**विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।**
**शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८**

विद्या-विनय-संपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि च एव श्व-पाके च पण्डिताः सम-दर्शिनः ॥

*vidyāvinayasaṁpanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini* ।
*śuni cai 'va śvapāke ca paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ* ॥

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने *vidyā vinaya saṁpanne* upon one endowed with learning and humility ब्राह्मणे *brāhmaṇe* on a Brahmana गवि *gavi* on a cow हस्तिनि *hastini* on an elephant शुनि *śuni* on a dog च *ca* and एव *eva* even श्वपाके

ship over karma and its consequences Actually, all work belongs to Nature and not to Atman It is further explained —

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ १५

न आ दत्ते कस्य चित् पापम् न च एव सुकृतम् विभु ।
अ-ज्ञानेन आ वृतम् ज्ञानम् तेन मुह् यन्ति जन्तव ॥

*nā 'datte kasyacit pāpam na cai 'va sukṛtam vibhuḥ |*
*ajñānenā 'vṛtam jñānam tena muhyanti jantavaḥ ||*

न *na* not आदत्ते *ādatte* takes कस्यचित् *kasyacit* of any one पापम् *pāpam* demerit न *na* not च *ca* and एव *eva* even सुकृतम् *sukṛtam* merit विभु *vibhuḥ* the Lord अज्ञानेन *ajñānena* by ignorance आवृतम् *āvṛtam* enveloped ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge तेन *tena* by this मुह्यन्ति *muhyanti* are deluded जन्तव *jantavaḥ* beings

**The Omnipresent does not take note of the merit or demerit of any. Knowledge is veiled by ignorance; mortals are thereby deluded 15**

*Prakriti* or Nature is constituted of five elements—*akāsa, vāyu, agni, āpaḥ* and *prithivi* (ether, air, fire, water and earth ) Akasa which is equated with space, is the substratum on which the other four elements play their parts Good and evil emanate from them in the course of their interaction, but Akasa remains unaffected by these modifications In the same way Iswara remains unaffected by the merits and demerits in beings A crystal glass seems to take the hue of the flower brought to its proximity, but actually the crystal remains ever itself Similarly, Atma seems to take the characteristics of

*ihai 'va tair jitaḥ sargo yeṣāṁ sāmye sthitaṁ manaḥ* |
*nirdoṣaṁ hi samaṁ brahma tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitāḥ* ||

इह *iha* here एव *eva* even तैः *taiḥ* by them जितः *jitaḥ* is conquered सर्गः *sargaḥ* creation येषाम् *yeṣāṁ* of whom साम्ये *sāmye* in equality स्थितम् *sthitaṁ* established मनः *manaḥ* mind निर्दोषम् *nir doṣaṁ* spotless हि *hi* indeed समम् *samaṁ* equal ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore ब्रह्मणि *brahmaṇi* in Brahman ते *te* they स्थिताः *sthitāḥ* are established

**Transitory existence is overcome even here by them whose mind rests on equality. Brahman is flawless and the same in all; therefore they are established in Brahman. 19**

Objects appear distorted when seen through a heterogeneous glass; but they present themselves just as they are when seen through a homogeneous glass. A clean and even glass causes no hindrance to right apperception. Mind in man occupies the position of the spectacles. A vibrant mind cognizes phenomenon outside; a mind in equilibrium cognizes noumenon or the Thing-in-Itself which is Brahman. As there is no vibration in Brahman It is the same in all. It is Pure Consciousness and therefore there is no modification in It. Changes such as increase, decrease and transformation do not take place in It; and for this reason It is said to be flawless. Those who have gained equanimity of mind are able to cognize Brahman. Once obtained, this intuition becomes permanent. No interruption whatsoever takes place in it. They that remain in *Brahmāvastha*

ज्ञानेन *jñānena* by wisdom तु *tu* but तत् *tat* that अज्ञानम् *ajñānam* ignorance येषाम् *yeṣām* whose नाशितम् *nāśitam* is destroyed आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self तेषाम् *teṣām* their आदित्यवत् *ādityavat* like the sun ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge प्रकाशयति *prakāśayati* reveals तत्परम् *tatparam* that highest

**Shining like the sun, knowledge reveals the Supreme in them, in whom ignorance is destroyed by Self-knowledge. 16**

Darkness vanishes when the sun rises, ignorance ceases to be with the dawn of knowledge As the sunlight reveals things in their true perspective, Self-knowledge or *Brahma-jnanam* posits the Reality of Brahman and the evanescence of *Prakriti* The knower of Brahman knows he is Brahman and none else.

The process of getting at Self-knowledge is now explained —

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७

तद्-बुद्धय तद्-आत्मान॰ तद्-निष्ठा तद् परायणा ।
गच्छन्ति अ पुन.-आ वृत्तिम् ज्ञान-निर्-धूत कल्मषा ॥

*tadbuddhayas tadātmānas tannisthās tatparāyanāh* ।
*gacchanty apunarāvrttim jñānanirdhūtakalmasāh* ॥

तद्बुद्धय· *tad buddhayaḥ* intellect absorbed in that तदात्मान *tad ātmānah* their self being that तन्निष्ठा *tanniṣṭhāḥ* established in that तत्परायणा *tat parāyanāh* with that for their supreme goal गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* go अपुनरावृत्तिम् *apunarāvṛttim* not again returning ज्ञाननिर्धूत

Likes and dislikes, happiness and misery—feelings of this kind are all associated with one's entanglement in the body. He who thinks of himself as the body gets deluded. But he who is established in Brahman is completely free from mentation.

What remains in the man from whose mind lust and greed are entirely eliminated? The Bliss of Brahman beams in him.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The characteristics of one who is established in Brahman are as follows :—

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥ २१

बाह्य-स्पर्शेषु अ-सक्त-आत्मा विन्दति आत्मनि यत् सुखम् ।
सः ब्रह्म-योग-युज्-त-आत्मा सुखम् अ-क्षयम् अश्-नुते ॥

*bāhyasparśeṣv asaktātmā vindaty ātmani yat sukham* ।
*sa brahmayoga yuktātmā sukham akṣayam aśnute* ॥

बाह्यस्पर्शेषु *bāhya sparśeṣu* in external contacts असक्तात्मा *asaktātmā* one whose mind is unattached विन्दति *vindati* finds आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self यत् *yat* (that) which सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness सः *saḥ* he ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा *brahma yoga yuktātmā* with the self engaged in the meditation of Brahman सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness अक्षयम् *akṣayaṁ* endless अश्नुते *aśnute* enjoys

**With the self detached from the external contacts he realizes the bliss in the Self. Devoted as he is to the meditation of Brahman, he enjoys imperishable Bliss. 21**

Those pleasures are perishable which are born of contact with the objects outside. They are styled

*śvapāke* an outcaste च *ca* and पण्डिता *paṇḍitāḥ* sages समदर्शिन *sama darśinaḥ* seeing equality

**Men of Self-knowledge are same-sighted on a Brahmana imbued with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste. 18**

Sunlight falls equally on all things It makes no difference between the sacred Ganga and sewage water The knower of Brahman cognizes Brahman only everywhere The distinction which the worldly make among beings, is born of ignorance To them an ideal Brahmana is one who is to be revered An outcaste is one who is to be shunned Among men the former is topmost in rank and the latter the last Similarly, among animals the cow is to be revered, the elephant admired and the cur kept aloof But the man of Self-knowledge does not see into the assumed differences in men, animals, birds and other creatures He cognizes the same Omniscience present in all these forms which are unreal The *Jnani* sees truly while the worldly see erroneously

Nescience creates plurality and difference among beings Omniscience reveals unity behind the seeming multiplicity

— Sri Ramakrishna

Is it possible for the worldly to rise up to this same-sightedness in all beings? The dictum comes —

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥ १९

इह एव तै जित सर्ग येषाम् साम्ये स्थितम् मन ।
निर्-दोषम् हि समम् ब्रह्म तस्मात् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिता ॥

initial agreeableness presents itself as pleasure. The prolongation of the contact as well as the separation of the senses from their objects transforms itself into misery. Like a flash of lightning the sensation called pleasure appears and disappears, and man pays dearly for it in the form of pang. The discerning one refrains oneself from this empty game, while the sense-bound one hunts after it.

If people ever sighted a venomous cobra, they used to supplicate, "O deity of deadliness, may you hide away your head from our sight and present the powerless tail alone to our view." It is good to recoil in this manner from sense-objects that drag down the mind. Instead of falling prey to them and then praying for redemption, it is better ever to keep aloof from them.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What measures ought one to adopt to do away with desire? The cluc is given :—

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३

शक्-नोति इह एव यः सोढुम् प्राक् शरीर-वि-मोक्षणात् ।
काम-क्रोध-उद्-भवम् वेगम् सः युक्तः सः सुखी नरः ॥

*śaknotī 'hai 'va yaḥ soḍhuṁ prāk śarīravimokṣaṇāt*
*kāmakrodhodbhavaṁ vegaṁ sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ*

शक्नोति *śaknoti* is able इह *iha* here (in this world) एव *eva* even यः *yaḥ* who सोढुम् *soḍhuṁ* to withstand प्राक् *prāk* before शरीरविमोक्षणात् *śarīra vimokṣaṇāt* liberation from the body कामक्रोधोद्भवम् *kāma krodhodbhavaṁ* born of desire and anger वेगम् *vegaṁ* the impulse सः *saḥ* he युक्तः *yuktaḥ* yogi सः *saḥ* he सुखी *sukhī* happy नरः *naraḥ* man

or Cosmic Consciousness transcend transitory existence They are not therefore bound by the limitations of this world even while living in it.

*Maya* is compared to the snake in motion and Brahman to the same snake at rest Kinetic energy is *Maya* and potential energy Brahman

—Sri Ramakrishna

How to know that there is no blemish in the knower of Brahman? It is explained thus —

**Bliss of Brahman Different from Sense-pleasure — 20-29**

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।
स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥ २०

न प्र हृष्-येत् प्रियम् प्र-आप्-य न उद्-विजेत् प्र-आप्-य च अ-प्रियम् ।
स्थिर-बुद्धि अ-सम्-मूढ ब्रह्म-विद् ब्रह्मणि स्थित ॥

*na prahṛṣyet priyam prāpya*
*no 'dvijet prāpya cā 'priyam* ।
*sthirabuddhir asammūḍho*
*brahmavid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ* ॥

न *na* not प्रहृष्येत् *prahṛsyet* should rejoice प्रियम् *priyam* the pleasant प्राप्य *prāpya* having obtained न *na* not उद्विजेत् *udvijet* should be troubled प्राप्य *prāpya* having obtained च *ca* and अप्रियम् *apriyam* the unpleasant स्थिरबुद्धि: *sthirabuddhiḥ* one with steady intellect असम्मूढ: *asammūdhaḥ* undeluded ब्रह्मवित् *brahmavit* Brahman-knower ब्रह्मणि *brahmaṇi* in Brahman स्थित: *sthitaḥ* established

**Established in Brahman, with firm understanding and with no delusion, the knower of Brahman rejoices not, getting what is pleasant and grieves not, getting what is unpleasant. 20**

*yo 'ntaḥsukho 'ntarārāmas tathā 'ntarjyotir eva yaḥ* ।
*sa yogī brahmanirvāṇaṁ brahmabhūto 'dhigacchati* ॥

यः *yaḥ* who अन्तःसुखः *antaḥ sukhaḥ* one whose happiness is within अन्तरारामः *antarārāmaḥ* one who rejoices within तथा *tathā* also अन्तर्ज्योतिः *antarjyotiḥ* one who is illuminated within एव *eva* even यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* that योगी *yogī* yogi ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् *brahma nirvāṇaṁ* absolute freedom ब्रह्मभूतः *brahma bhūtaḥ* becoming Brahman अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* attains

**He whose happiness is within, whose delight is within, whose illumination is within only, that yogi becomes Brahman and gains the Beatitude of Brahman.**

The ignorant man hunts for happiness in the external world. He fancies he is obtaining it there; but no sooner he clutches at it, than it vanishes. This is due to happiness not being inherent in things external. The projected happiness is actually in the Self. Similarly, repose and joy are in the Self and nowhere else. In search of enjoyment the senses get extroverted, only to be foiled. Atman is Bliss; therefore, real happiness is in Itself. In short, whatever is sought after externally, is actually in oneself. The core of one's being is Brahman, realizing which, everlasting Beatitude is gained.

Knowledge is not for him who is attached to the world. Enlightenment and bliss ensue in direct proportion to disentanglement with the sense-objects.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Furthermore :—

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ २५

sense-pleasures. The purified mind enjoys the Bliss of Atman; and this Bliss suffers from no mutation. It is therefore held as being imperishable.

There are signs of the awakened ones — those that have got into *Atma bodha* Those blessed ones are like the mythological Chakravaka bird which, even when parched with thirst to the point of death, does not alight on earth full of water, but seeks to slake it with the rain water only if and when available up in the sky. The God-intoxicated ones revel only in Him and in nothing else.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Why are sense-pleasures shunned by the enlightened? Because:—

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ २२

ये हि सम्-स्पर्श-जाः भोगाः दुःख-योनयः एव ते ।
आदि-अन्त-वन्त कौन्तेय न तेषु रम्-अते बुध. ॥

*ye hi samsparśajā bhogā duhkhayonaya eva te* ।
*ādy anta vantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhah* ॥

ये *ye* which हि *hi* verily संस्पर्शजा *samsparśajāḥ* contact-born भोगाः *bhogāḥ* enjoyments दुःखयोनयः *duḥkhayonayaḥ* generators of pain एव *eva* only ते *te* they आद्यन्तवन्तः *ādy anta vantaḥ* having beginning and end कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya न *na* not तेषु *teṣu* in them रमते *ramate* rejoices बुधः *budhaḥ* the wise one

**The delights that are contact-born are verily the wombs of pain; they have, O son of Kunti, a beginning and an end; no wise man rejoices in them. 22**

Misery to which man is so much prone is ever the outcome of the search for sense-pleasure. When the senses create contact with their objects, the

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानाम् *kāma krodha viyuktānāṁ* of those who are free from desire and anger यतीनाम् *yatīnāṁ* of the self-controlled ascetics यतचेतसाम् *yata cetasāṁ* of those who have controlled their thoughts अभितः *abhitaḥ* on all sides ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् *brahma nirvāṇaṁ* absolute freedom वर्तते *vartate* exists विदितात्मनाम् *viditātmanāṁ* of those who have realized the Self

**The Beatitude of Brahman is both here and hereafter for those Sanyasins who have shed lust and anger, subdued their minds and realized the Self. 26**

*Nyasa* is sublimation; *Samnyasa* or *Sanyasa* is total sublimation. This is the positive meaning of the word *Sanyasa*. Negating the phenomenon is its negative meaning. In whichever way Sanyasa is practised, the attainment of the Beatitude of Brahman is the result. The Sanyasin is no more conscious of the body than the ordinary people are of their shadows. He is therefore liberated even while in the body. The here and hereafter become one endless *Brahmāvastha* to the Sanyasin.

Mind has to be vanquished for the attainment of Beatitude. The process is as follows :—

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥ २७

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।
विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥ २८

स्पर्शान् कृत्वा बहिः बाह्यान् चक्षुः च एव अन्तरे भ्रुवोः ।
प्राण-अपानौ समौ कृत्वा नासा-अभि-अन्तर-चारिणौ ॥

**He who is able to resist the impulse of desire and anger even here before he quits the body—he is a yogi, he is a happy man.** **23**

Desire or its counterpart anger is bound to make its appearance as lang as life lasts in the body They are capable of raising their hoods even while man is at the point of death It is in and through indulgence, indulgent observation and covetous imagination that desire thrives Anger, its negative expression, sprouts when the sense-objects prove themselves unpleasant Desire fostered in the mind expresses itself in the physique by directing the senses covetously on their objects, there is then a longing for them visible in the countenance Anger has its physical expression as perspiration, throbbing of the body, quivering of the lip and reddening of the eyes A yogi is he who has quelled the impulses of desire and anger This done, the bliss of the Self becomes tangible to him

Lust and greed have immersed people in sin If you behold women as the embodiments of the Divine Mother, you will escape from the snares of lust and its aftermath, misery

God vision is impossible until desire is vanquished

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

To whom is the bliss of Brahman possible? The Lord clarifies —

योऽन्तः सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥ २४

यः अन्तः सुखः अन्तः-आरामः तथा अन्तः ज्योतिः एव यः ।
सः योगी ब्रह्म निर्वाणम् ब्रह्म भूतः अधि गच्छति ॥

while actually they are at rest. The breath exhaled is called *prāṇa* and that inhaled, *apāna*. Regulating and harmonizing the inward and outward flow of breath is called *Prāṇāyāma*. Stilling the mind and equalizing the passage of breath either way through *Prāṇāyāma* are interrelated. When mind ceases to function, breath stops, and when breath stops mind ceases to function.

Mind gets disturbed and depraved every time desire, fear and anger make their evil appearance in it. The reflection of an object gets hazy and broken on the surface of disturbed water. Likewise the presence of Atman is obscured in a disturbed mind.It should first of all gain quietude through the conquest of desire, fear and anger. Meditation then becomes easy and spontaneous.

*Muni* is the original word for sage. He is a *Muni* whose mind flows incessantly towards the Lord. He is liberated who is established in Pure Consciousness.

The next chapter elaborates on the ideas contained in these two stanzas.

Directing the mind incessantly towards Iswara, how should the *Muni* behold Him? The answer comes:—

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥ २९

भोक्तारम् यज्ञ-तपसाम् सर्व-लोक-महा-ईश्वरम् ।
सु-हृदम् सर्व-भूतानाम् ज्ञात्वा माम् शान्तिम् ऋच्छति ॥

*bhoktāraṁ yajñatapasāṁ sarvaloka maheśvaram* ।
*suhṛdaṁ sarvabhūtānāṁ jñātvā māṁ śāntim ṛcchati* ॥

लभन्ते ब्रह्म-निर्वाणम् ऋषय क्षीण-कल्मषा. ।
छिन्न-द्वैधा यत-आत्मान सर्व-भूत-हिते रता ॥

*labhante brahmanirvānam rsayah ksīnakalmasāh* ।
*chinnadvaidhā yatātmānah sarvabhūtahite ratāh* ॥

लभन्ते *labhante* obtain ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम् *brahma nirvānam* absolute freedom ऋषय. *rsayah* the Rishis क्षीणकल्मषा: *ksīnakalmasāh* those whose sins are destroyed छिन्नद्वैधा: *chinnadvaidhāh* whose dualities are torn asunder यतात्मान *yatātmānah* those who are self-controlled सर्व भूतहिते *sarva bhūta hite* in the welfare of all beings रता: *ratāh* rejoicing

**With sins destroyed, doubts (dualities) removed, minds disciplined, being delighted in the welfare of all beings, the Rishis attain the Beatitude of Brahman. 25**

Rishis are they who have realized the substratum of all the things Perfect enlightenment is theirs because of complete detachment from the mundane. Though detached, they engage themselves in the welfare of all Because of complete self-control they commit no sin. The Beatitude of Brahman is theirs as a matter of course

Their excellence is further elucidated —

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥ २६

काम-क्रोध-वि-युक्तानाम् यतीनाम् यत-चेतसाम् ।
अभित ब्रह्म-निर्वाणम् वर्तते विदित-आत्मनाम् ॥

*kāma krodha viyuktānām yatinām yatacetasām* ।
*abhito brahmanirvānam vartate viditātmanām* ॥

# ध्यानयोगः

## DHYANA YOGA — THE YOGA OF MEDITATION

## CHAPTER VI

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa—The Favourable Environment—The Method — The Criterion for Progress — Progress in Yoga—Perfection in Yoga—The Restive Mind has to be Resisted—The Fate of the Imperfect Yogi—Yoga is Unparalleled.

**Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa — 1-9**

श्री भगवानुवाच

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥ १

अन्-आ-श्रि-तः कर्म-फलम् कार्यम् कर्म करोति यः ।
सः सम्-नि-आसी च योगी च न निर्-अग्निः न च अ-क्रियः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ* ।
*sa saṁnyāsī ca yogī ca na niragnir na cā 'kriyaḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

अनाश्रितः *anāśritaḥ* not depending (on) कर्मफलम् *karma phalaṁ* fruit of action कार्यम् *kāryaṁ* bounden कर्म *karma* duty करोति *karoti* performs यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* he संन्यासी *saṁnyāsī* Sanyasi (ascetic) च *ca* and योगी *yogī* yogi च *ca* and न *na* not निरग्निः *nir agniḥ* without fire न *na* not च *ca* and अक्रियः *akriyaḥ* without action

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**He who discharges his duty without seeking its fruit, he is the Sanyasin, he is the yogi; not he who is without sacred fire and without rites. 1**

People in general have a misconception about *sanyasa*. That the Sanyasin should not shoulder any

यम्-त-इन्द्रिय-मनो-बुद्धि' मुनि मोक्ष-परायण ।
वि-गत-इच्छा भय-क्रोध य सदा मुच्-त एव स ॥

*sparśān krtvā bahir bāhyāmś*
*cakṣuś cai 'vā 'ntare bhruvoḥ* ।
*prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā*
*nāsābhyantaracāriṇau* ॥
*yatendriya manobuddhir munir mokṣa parāyaṇah* ।
*vigatecchā bhaya krodho yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ* ॥

स्पर्शान् *sparśān* contacts कृत्वा *kṛtvā* rendering बहि *bahiḥ* outside बाह्यान् *bāhyān* external चक्षु *cakṣuḥ* eye (gaze) च *ca* and एव *eva* even अन्तरे *antare* in the middle भ्रुवो *bhruvoḥ* of the (two) eyebrows प्राणापानौ *prāṇāpānau* the outgoing and the incoming breaths समौ *samau* equal कृत्वा *kṛtvā* having made नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ *nāsābhyantaracāriṇau* moving inside the nostrils

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धि *yatendriya manobuddhih* with senses, mind and intellect controlled मुनि *muniḥ* the sage मोक्षपरायण *mokṣa parāyaṇaḥ* having liberation as his supreme goal विगतेच्छाभयक्रोध *vigatecchā bhaya krodhaḥ* free from desire, fear and anger य *yaḥ* who सदा *sadā* for ever मुक्त *muktaḥ* free एव *eva* verily स *saḥ* he

**Shutting out external objects, fixing the gaze between the eyebrows, equalizing the outward and inward breaths moving in the nostrils, the sage who has controlled the senses, mind and intellect, who is solely pursuing liberation, who has cast away desire, fear and anger, he verily is liberated. 27-28**

When sound and other sense objects are excluded from the mind, they are said to have been shut out. The eyes remain half closed in meditation, their gaze simply seems to be fixed between the eyebrows

*kalpaḥ* one who has not renounced thoughts योगी *yogi* yogi भवति *bhavati* becomes कश्चन *kaścana* anyone

**Know that as yoga, O Pandava, which is called Sanyasa; for none becomes a yogi without renouncing Sankalpa.** **2**

It is *sankalpa* to create a formative imagination in the mind about the fruits of action. *Sankalpa* is the selfish motive behind an action. It is actuated by desire. Endless projects taking place in the mind, one nullifying or modifying the other are all born of *sankalpa*. He who is a prey to it can never become a yogi. *Sanyasa* is the renunciation of *sankalpa*. He who succeeds in renouncing it qualifies himself for the practice of yoga. Strength of mind is his who practises yoga. Only a man of strong mind can meditate as well as discharge his duties very efficiently. This is how *sankalpa sanyasa* and karma yoga become identical.

How *sanyasa* augments yoga is being explained now :—

**आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।**
**योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३**

आ-रुरुक्षोः मुनेः योगम् कर्म कारणम् उच्यते ।
योग-आ-रूढस्य तस्य एव शमः कारणम् उच्-य-ते ॥

*ārurukṣor muner yogaṁ karma kāraṇam ucyate* ।
*yogārūḍhasya tasyai 'va śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate* ॥

आरुरुक्षोः *ārurukṣoḥ* wishing to climb मुनेः *muneḥ* of a Muni or sage योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga कर्म *karma* action कारणम् *kāraṇaṁ* the cause उच्यते *ucyate* is said योगारूढस्य *yogārūḍhasya* of one who has attained (to

भोक्तारम् *bhoktāram* the enjoyer यज्ञतपसाम् *yajña tapasām* of sacrifices and austerities सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् *sarva loka maheśvaram* the great Lord of all worlds सुहृदम् *suhṛdaṁ* friend सर्वभूतानाम् *sarvabhūtānām* of all beings ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known माम् *mām* me शान्तिम् *śāntim* peace ऋच्छति *ṛcchati* attains

**Having known Me as the Lord of Yajnas and asceticisms, as the Ruler of all the worlds, as the Friend of all beings, he attains Peace.** **29**

It is through the grace of the Lord that the earnest souls take to the performance of *Yajnas* and practice of asceticism. The Lord again is the goal of their great endeavours He is the Overlord of the entire universe. Not only does He rule over all, but also protects them as their genuine Friend. He resides as Conscience in the hearts of all beings and assigns the fruits of their various activities. As karma emanates from Him, knowledge and wisdom also come to beings from Him. The *Muni* who gives his ceaseless thought to these divine glories of the Lord gains supreme Peace.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे संन्यासयोगो नाम पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde saṁnyāsa yogo nāma pañcamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fifth discourse designated:

SANYASA YOGA

merits such as unison, equality, truthfulness, good conduct, steadfastness, straightforwardness, non-injury to beings and detachment from the world.

What are the marks of the yogi who has attained perfection in yoga? The explanation comes :—

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसङ्कल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥ ४

यदा हि न इन्द्रिय-अर्थेषु न कर्मसु अनु-षज्जते ।
सर्व-सम्-कल्प सम्-नि-आसी योग-आ-रूढः तदा उच्-य-ते ॥

*yadā hi ne 'ndriyārtheṣu na karmasv anuṣajjate* ।
*sarvasaṁkalpasaṁnyāsī yogārūḍhas tado 'cyate* ॥

यदा *yadā* when हि *hi* verily न *na* not इन्द्रियार्थेषु *indriyārtheṣu* in sense-objects न *na* not कर्मसु *karmasu* in actions अनुषज्जते *anuṣajjate* is attached सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी *sarva saṁkalpa saṁnyāsī* renouncer of all thoughts योगारूढः *yogārūḍhaḥ* one who has attained to yoga तदा *tadā* then उच्यते *ucyate* is said

**Then alone is one said to have attained to yoga, when, having renounced all Sankalpas, one does not get attached to sense-objects and actions. 4**

*Yogārūḍha* is one who has attained the acme of yoga. Human perfection reaches its zenith in him. Deep *dhyana* or the meditation of the yogi develops into *samadhi* or Enlightenment. In this state, the external world which is the projection of the mind, is no more for him. There is no mentation in him to manipulate the senses. As in sound sleep, so in this self-sufficiency and beatitude of *samadhi* the obligatory duties even get suspended. Freed from

responsibility and that he should be a drone, is the prevalent notion Lighting fire is a symbol of performing *Yajna* The general wrong belief is that the Sanyasin is not to do any altruistic work Arjuna's plea that he would not engage himself in the impending war and that he would beat a retreat and live on holy alms, is an example of this wrong idea But the Lord's contention is different What He upholds is the true practice of Vedanta No person should ever discard action Each has his duty and it has to be well executed Among the doers of duty, he is a Sanyasin, he is a yogi, who discharges duty for duty's sake and in no way attached to the fruits of his action Because of the renunciation of attachment to work and its effect, he is a Sanyasin and because of his doing the duty very efficiently he is a karma yogi

What is then the relationship between karma sanyasa and karma yoga?

The explanation comes:—

य संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं त विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसङ्कल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ २

यम् सम्-नि-आसम् इति प्राहु   योगम् तम् विद्धि पाण्डव ।
न हि अ-सम्-नि-अस्-त सम्-कल्प   योगी भवति क-चन ॥

*yam samnyāsam iti prāhur yogam tam viddhi pāndava* |
*na hy asamnyastasamkalpo yogi bhavati kaścana* ||

यम् *yam* which सन्यासम् *samnyāsam* renunciation इति *iti* thus प्राहु *prāhuḥ* (they) call योगम् *yogam* yoga तम् *tam* that विद्धि *viddhi* know पाण्डव *pāndava* O Pandava न *na* not हि *hi* verily असन्यस्तसकल्प *asamnyasta sam-*

**Let a man raise himself by his own self; let him not debase himself. For he is himself his friend, himself his foe.** 5

One is oneself responsible for one's distinction or debasement. The contributions that others make in these respects are secondary. It is but usual that one complains that one's enemy has done havoc to one. But no one can be hurt without oneself contributing to it. It is possible for a *sadhaka* to avail himself of a wrong done to him by his enemy for self-purification. Because of misunderstanding and maladjustment man paves the way for self-debasement. And by doing so he becomes his own enemy. On the other hand, by right understanding and right conduct he elevates himself and thereby becomes his own friend. One is one's own arch-friend or arch-foe. The one that understands this fact, learns an invaluable lesson for life.

No one courts enmity; friendship alone is sought after by all. That being the case, how shall one choose to be one's true friend? The solution is offered on this wise :—

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६

बन्धुः आत्मा आत्मनः तस्य येन आत्मा एव आत्मना जितः ।
अन्-आत्मनः तु शत्रु-त्वे वर्त-इत आत्मा एव शत्रु-वत् ॥

*bandhur ātmā 'tmanas tasya yenā 'tmai 'vā 'tmanā jitaḥ* ।
*anātmanas tu śatrutve vartetā 'tmai 'va śatruvat* ॥

yoga) तस्य *tasya* of him एव *eva* even शमः *śamaḥ* inaction (quiescence) कारणम् *kāraṇam* the cause उच्यते *ucyate* is said

**Karma is said to be the means of the Muni who seeks to attain to yoga; serenity is said to be the means when he has attained to yoga. 3**

*He is a Muni in the making who applies himself* ardently to the practice of meditation. Though practising regularly, his mind does not easily get concentrated. It wanders away in spite of himself. In that case the yogi ought to engage himself eagerly in karma yoga. The non-yogi who busies himself with the work he undertakes, is rewarded by nature with sound sleep at night. The yogi is busier definitely in the discharge of his duty, but with no attachment and selfish motive. Good concentrated meditation is the reward he gets for his disinterested work. He can know this fact by experience day by day. Clarity of mind is the result of deep meditation. It is this clarity that gets itself settled as serenity. Through proper meditation the mind gets poised in equilibrium. As the crystallization of a stuff takes place in a restful condition, so the mind gets fixed in equilibrium through meditation. On the attainment of serenity it becomes fit for all purposes personal and public. Deep meditation is the yogi's personal activity in which he delights in the sublimity of the Self. At other times the external work that he carries on is done to perfection. Serenity is the sure means for his attaining all these excellences.

Serenity is the foremost of all the accomplishments of the yogi. From this divine gift emanate

if one can assume this attitude with firm conviction one becomes liberated. If a man bitten by a venomous snake strongly suggests to himself that there is no poison, he falls no prey to the bite.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benign good that the self-emulating yogi can do to himself? The answer is :—

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ ७

जित-आत्मनः प्र-शान्तस्य परम-आत्मा सम्-आहितः ।
शीत-उष्ण सुख-दुःखेषु तथा मान-अप-मानयोः ॥

*jitātmanaḥ praśāntasya paramātmā samāhitaḥ* ।
*śītoṣṇasukhaduḥkheṣu tathā mānāpamānayoḥ* ॥

जितात्मनः *jitātmanaḥ* of the self-controlled प्रशान्तस्य *praśāntasya* of the peaceful परमात्मा *paramātmā* the supreme Self समाहितः *samāhitaḥ* balanced शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु *śītoṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu* in cold and heat, pleasure and pain तथा *tathā* as also मानापमानयोः *mānāpamānayoḥ* in honour and dishonour

**The self-disciplined and serene man's Supreme Self is constant in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.** 7

The good and evil that befall the yogi through the agency of the elements in nature and the living beings, do not in any manner affect him. The external world is not viewed by this man of self-mastery as benign or malign. Clarity of mind is his who is established in self-control. His mind reveals the Supreme Self enshrined in it. To the yogi this holy revelation is superior to everything else. Once contacted, this holy cognition becomes constant.

*sankalpa*, his mind is calm like an ocean without waves. In this plenitude of bliss the thoughts of this world and of any others likely to come, are all blotted out. The Eternal Presence alone is.

Desires and doings are all born of *sankalpa*.

— Manu II-2

O desire, I know wherefrom you take your origin. You are born of *sankalpa*. I shall refuse to make *sankalpa* of you. Annihilation then, is your lot.

— Santi Parva 177-25

The brilliant presence of Iswara cannot be perceived in that mental firmament which is disturbed by the gale of desires.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What should, therefore, the *sadhaka* do? The injunction is :—

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५

उद्-हरेत् आत्मना आत्मानम् न आत्मानम् अव-साद्-अयेत् ।
आत्मा एव हि आत्मनः बन्धुः आत्मा एव रिपुः आत्मनः ॥

*uddhared ātmanā 'tmānaṁ nā 'tmānam avasādayet* ।
*ātmai 'va hy ātmano bandhur ātmai 'va ripur ātmanaḥ* ॥

उद्धरेत् *uddharet* let (him) lift आत्मना *ātmanā* by the self आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self न *na* not आत्मानम् *ātmā-naṁ* the self अवसादयेत् *avasādayet* let (him) lower आत्मा *ātmā* the self एव *eva* only हि *hi* verily आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self बन्धुः *bandhuḥ* friend आत्मा *ātmā* the self एव *eva* only रिपुः *ripuḥ* the enemy आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self

The clarity of understanding obtained through the intellectual pursuit and pious study of the scripture goes by the nomenclature, *jnana* or knowledge; but this is not sufficient in itself. It has to culminate in *vijñāna* — intuition which is mentioned here as wisdom. The Truth cogitated upon becomes cognized and the yogi delights both in the process and attainment. While everything else in nature shifts and changes, Akasa or space alone remains ever itself. Similarly the Self is the substratum behind the fleeting universe. It is therefore termed as *kūṭastha*. The senses get quelled subsequent to the mind being controlled. The achievement of the yogi is that he is the conqueror of the senses. Mud pie and toys are of immense value to children; but adults look on those things with indifference. While the worldly-minded ones grade the values of a clod, a stone and a piece of gold, the yogi beholds them all as modifications of the transient nature. He views all the things of the world with an equal eye, his mind being established in Brahman.

Worldly people are they who seek after the impermanent things of the earth. Godly people are they who seek God and nothing else.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Inert things are all viewed with an equal eye by the yogi; but how does he view people of varying status? The clarification comes :—

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीन मध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ ९

बन्धु *bandhuh* friend आत्मा *ātmā* the self आत्मन *ātmanah* of the self तस्य *tasya* his येन *yena* by whom आत्मा *ātmā* the self एव *eva* even आत्मना *ātmanā* by the self जित *jitah* is conquered अनात्मन *anātmanah* of unconquered self तु *tu* but शत्रुत्वे *śatrutve* in the place of an enemy वर्तेत *varteta* would remain आत्मा *ātmā* the self एव *eva* even शत्रुवत् *śatruvat* like an enemy

**To him who has conquered his (base) self by the (divine) self, his own self is the friend; but to him who has not subdued the self, his own self acts as the foe. 6**

The base and the divine are the two mutually opposing natures at work in man When either of them predominates the other gets vanquished Where the body, mind and senses are under perfect control, the divine nature prevails and pulls the man up Progressively he evolves into high orders of existence But when he submits to the base nature it ruins him completely The foe outside hurts or attempts to hurt occasionally Even then it is possible for the self-disciplining yogi to turn that adverse situation to advantage, every ordeal calmly handled adds to the calibre of one's mind The foe of the base nature within oneself, on the other hand, is constantly causing havoc The reckless man therefore is personally responsible for the evils that he has brought on himself He is the worst enemy of himself The yogi is the only one who is a genuine friend of himself causing self-emancipation in all respects Barring him, the others are enemies of themselves in varying degrees

Both bondage and freedom are in the minds of men "I am a liberated soul, I am the child of God, none can bind me —

bound man views one as a sovereign and another as a sweeper, one as father and another as son, and so on. But after intuiting God, these differences vanish. There is no more of the good and the bad, the high and the low. God-perception alone prevails everywhere. — Sri Ramakrishna

What is the self-preparation that one ought to undergo to come by this universal outlook? The process is presented :—

**The Favourable Environment — 10-11**

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ १०

योगी युञ्जीत सततम् आत्मानम् रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यम्-त-चित्त-आत्मा निर्-आशीः अ-परि-ग्रहः ॥

*yogī yuñjīta satatam ātmānaṁ rahasi sthitaḥ* ।
*ekākī yatacittātmā nirāśīr aparigrahaḥ* ॥

योगी *yogī* the yogi युञ्जीत *yuñjīta* let him keep the mind steady सततम् *satataṁ* constantly आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* self रहसि *rahasi* in solitude स्थितः *sthitaḥ* remaining एकाकी *ekākī* alone यतचित्तात्मा *yatacittātmā* one with the mind and body controlled निराशीः *nir āśīḥ* free from hope अपरिग्रहः *aparigrahaḥ* free from greed

**A yogi should always try to concentrate his mind living alone in solitude, having subdued his mind and body and got rid of desires and possessions. 10**

It is in solitude that the mental worth of one is truly seen into. When an aspirant shuts himself up in a room, he knows that there are people in the other rooms and they know that he is confined to a particular room. A setting like this does not fulfil the condition of the *sadhaka* being alone in solitude.

Fluctuations in nature such as heat and cold, praise and censure do not affect him any more than the ravings of the delirious patient affect the operating surgeon. Indifferent to everything else, the yogi is in constant communion with the Supreme Self. This is the *Sreyas* sought after by the wise.

The mind that delights in its communion with God detaches itself easily from sense-pleasure. This is how the devotees get themselves emancipated Contrary to this, the mind that delights in the mundane gets entangled

— Sri Ramakrishna

The constancy of the yogi is further expatiated on :—

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥ ८

ज्ञान-वि-ज्ञान तृप्-त-आत्मा कूट-स्थ वि-जि-त-इन्द्रिय· ।
युज-त इति उच्-य-ते योगी सम-लोष्ट-अश्म-काञ्चनः ॥

*jñāna vijñāna trptātmā kūtastho vijitendriyaḥ* ।
*yukta ity ucyate yogī sama loṣṭāśma kāñcanaḥ* ॥

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा *jñāna vijñāna trptātmā* one who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom (self-realization) कूटस्थ *kūtasthaḥ* unshaken विजितेन्द्रिय. *vijitendriyaḥ* who has conquered the senses युक्त *yuktah* united or harmonized इति *iti* thus उच्यते *ucyate* is said योगी *yogī* yogi समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चन *sama lostāśma kāñcanaḥ* one to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same

**That yogi is steadfast who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom, who remains unshaken, who has conquered the senses, to whom a clod, a stone and a piece of gold are the same.** 8

He alone is established in self-control who does not cast a covetous eye on the gold coins that he comes across even in a deserted house. That alone is virtue which is practised quietly and unostentatiously.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What sort of setting ought one to have for the practice of meditation? Here is the direction given:-

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११

शुचौ देशे प्रति-स्थाप्य स्थिरम् आसनम् आत्मनः ।
न-अति-उद्-श्रितम् न-अति-नीचम् चैल-अजिन-कुश-उत्तरम् ॥

*śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthiram āsanam ātmanaḥ* |
*nā 'tyucchritaṁ nā 'tinīcaṁ cailājinakuśottaram* ||

शुचौ *śucau* in a clean देशे *deśe* spot प्रतिष्ठाप्य *pratiṣṭhāpya* having established स्थिरम् *sthiraṁ* firm आसनम् *āsanaṁ* seat आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* his own न *na* not अति उच्छ्रितम् *ati ucchritaṁ* very high न *na* not अतिनीचम् *ati nīcaṁ* very low चैल अजिन कुश उत्तरम् *caila ajina kuśa uttaraṁ* a cloth, skin and kusa-grass one over the other

**Having firmly fixed in a clean place, his seat, neither too high nor too low, and having spread over it the kusa-grass, a deer skin and a cloth, one over the other; 11**

There is a close relationship between the environment and the cast of the mind of the person placed therein. Living in a dirty hovel naturally leads the dweller to baseness and depression of mind. Living in a clean place of natural beauty invigorates and elevates the mind.

सु-हृद्-मित्र-अरि-उद्-आसीन मध्य-स्थ-द्वेष्य-बन्धुषु ।
साधुषु अपि च पापेषु सम-बुद्धिः वि-शिष्यते ॥

*suhṛn mitrāryudāsīna madhyastha dvesya bandhuṣu* ।
*sādhuṣv api ca pāpeṣu samabuddhir viśisyate* ॥

सुहृत् मित्र अरि उदासीन मध्यस्थ द्वेष्य बन्धुषु *suhṛt mitra ari udāsīna madhyastha dveṣya bandhusu* in the good-hearted, in friends, in enemies, in neutrals, in arbiters, in haters and in relatives साधुषु *sādhusu* in the righteous अपि *api* also च *ca* and पापेषु *pāpesu* in the unrighteous समबुद्धिः *sama buddhih* one who has equal mind विशिष्यते *viśisyate* excels

**He stands supreme who has equal regard for friends, companions, enemies, neutrals, arbiters, the hateful, the relatives, saints and sinners. 9**

It is but natural for an ordinary man to react differently with people in varying levels of attainments and relationship. They are not normal human beings if they did not behave appropriate to the worth of the persons they contact. But the yogi's angle of vision is different. To him the whole world is a stage. Beings in it are all different manifestations of the same Divinity. As the actors of the different characters in a drama are all viewed alike by the stage manager, the yogi has nothing but a benign attitude even to those hostile to him. His supremely benevolent attitude is the greatest gift made by him to the conflict-ridden humanity.

When seen from the plains the grass on the lawn and the deodar tree on the border of the lawn present strikingly contrasty pictures. But if they be seen from the peak of a mountain they would all blend into one even verdure Similarly the earth-

Mind loses its innate purity to the extent it contacts objects through the senses. It is very much like the rain water contacting the earth and becoming muddy. Suspending the senses and resting the mind in the Self is the only means to reclaim it to its original state. Like bathing and cleansing the body with water, mind has to be purified by repeatedly merging it in the Self. And this process is life-long. It is to be as obligatory as bathing and eating. The power and potentiality of the mind increases as it progresses in self-purification.

Milk gets easily mixed with water; but if it is churned into butter and put in water it floats maintaining its individuality, instead. Man's mind that easily gets lost in the sense-objects has to be cultivated in devotion to the Lord in solitude. Worldly contact that comes subsequent to the development of devotion to the Lord causes no harm.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Should the body be in any manner disciplined to bring about concentration of mind? The injunction in this respect is :—

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३

समम् काय-शिरः-ग्रीवम् धार्-अयन् अ-चलम् स्थिरः ।
सम्-प्र-ईक्ष्-य नासिका-अग्रम् स्वम् दिशः च अन्-अव-लोक्-अयन् ॥

*samaṁ kāyaśirogrīvaṁ dhārayann acalaṁ sthiraḥ* ।
*saṁprekṣya nāsikāgraṁ svaṁ diśaś cā 'navalokayan* ॥

समम् *samaṁ* erect काय शिरः ग्रीवम् *kāya śiraḥ grīvaṁ* body, head and neck धारयन् *dhārayan* holding अचलम् *acalaṁ* still स्थिरः *sthiraḥ* steady संप्रेक्ष्य *saṁprekṣya* gazing at नासिकाग्रम् *nāsikāgraṁ* tip of the nose स्वम्

Others should not know of his whereabouts and he should have none but God to commune with The *thought of food rushes to the forefront when one* chooses to fast Akin to it, the untrained mind becomes more turbulent when placed in solitude, suppressed desires would then try to gain ground But if the mind chooses to commune with the Divine, instead, it augurs well for it That is really the state of desirelessness It is by being alone in solitude that one's mind can truly be assessed by oneself

He is not a good chauffeur who has not learnt to apply the brake properly and stop the motor car. The human body may be likened to a car People have learnt ever to drive it on, but they do not know how to suspend its activities voluntarily Instead of being masters of the body, they are slaves to it He is a yogi who has learnt to make proper use of the body and to keep it quiet at his will Quieting down the body and mind is meditation

Minimizing the bodily requirements is imperative for spiritual advancement He is a yogi who has reduced his bodily needs to the bare minimum And no thought whatsoever is to be given to the possession of those few things, lest they should interfere with his meditation Relinquishment of possessions and idea of possessions, is a prelude to good meditation

The truly virtuous man is he who commits no sin even when he is all by himself *That is no virtue which is practised for* fear of public opinion He alone is established in self-control who does not lustfully think of a woman in privacy or in public

प्र-शान्त-आत्मा वि-गम्-त-भीः ब्रह्म-चारि-व्रते स्थितः ।
मनः सम्-यम्-य मद्-चित्तः युञ्-तः आस्-ईत मद्-परः ॥

*praśāntātmā vigatabhīr brahmacārivrate sthitaḥ |*
*manaḥ saṁyamya maccitto yukta āsīta matparaḥ ||*

प्रशान्तात्मा *praśāntātmā* serene-minded विगतभीः *vigatabhīḥ* fearless ब्रह्मचारिव्रते *brahmacāri vrate* in the vow of Brahmacharya स्थितः *sthitaḥ* firm मनः *manaḥ* the mind संयम्य *saṁyamya* having controlled मच्चित्तः *maccittaḥ* thinking on Me युक्तः *yuktaḥ* balanced आसीत *āsīta* let him sit मत्परः *matparaḥ* having Me as the Supreme Goal

**Serene and fearless, firm in the vow of a Brahmachari, subdued in mind, he should sit in yoga thinking on Me and intent on Me alone. 14**

That mind is said to be serene, which is as placid as a rippleless lake. As there is in the yogi a heroic deliberation to train the mind this way, fear finds no place in him. He is a Brahmachari who, untouched by lust, is pure as a baby in thought, word and deed. As his mind has not been allowed to become Satanic, subjugation of the mind is a matter of course with him. No two conflicting things simultaneously occupy one's mind. The yogi's mind is dedicated to serve and commune with Paramatman only. He is therefore ever intent on Iswara.

When a person observes the vow of Brahmacharya rigidly for twelve years he develops a new sensory nerve known as *Medhanadi*. It is the intuitive faculty. Intricate and knotty problems of life are no problems to him. That penetrating faculty makes it possible for him to intuit Iswara as well, it being the acme of enlightenment.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Seats like a lounge, a swing or a hammock are no good for meditation. A heap of grass or pebbles, a pile of logs — things such as these are also to be avoided. A rock or a platform constructed about two feet above the ground is quite suitable for this purpose. One would feel dizzy if the pedestal be too high. A seat on the ground would provide no protection against creeping insects. The provision on the platform, of a sacred kusa-grass mat, a deer skin and a cloth, one over the other would make an ideal seat for meditation.

How should one practise meditation? The process is explained :—

**The Method — 12-15**

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२

तत्र एक-अग्रम् मनः कृ-त्वा यम्-त-चित्त-इन्द्रिय-क्रिय॰ ।
उप-विश्-य आस्-अने युञ्ज्यात् योगम् आत्म-वि-शुद्धये ॥

*tatrai 'kāgram manaḥ kṛtvā yatacittendriyakriyaḥ* |
*upaviśyā 'sane yuñjyād yogam ātmaviśuddhaye* ||

तत्र *tatra* there एकाग्रम् *ekāgram* one pointed मनः *manaḥ* the mind कृत्वा *kṛtvā* having made यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः *yata cittendriya kriyaḥ* one who has controlled the actions of the mind and the senses उपविश्य *upaviśya* being seated आसने *āsane* on the seat युञ्ज्यात् *yuñjyāt* let him practise योगम् *yogam* yoga आत्मविशुद्धये *ātma viśuddhaye* for the purification of the self

**Sitting there on his seat, making the mind one-pointed and restraining the thinking faculty and the senses, he should practise yoga for self-purification. 12**

live in this world care-free and go about his undertakings. Otherwise, the sunset of death will harass him much.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What are the regulations that the yogi has to observe in his earthly life? They are presented as follows :—

**The Criterion for Progress — 16-20**

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।
न चाति स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६

न अति-अश्-नतः तु योगः अस्ति न च एकान्तम् अन्-अश्-नतः ।
न च अति स्वप्न-शीलस्य जाग्रतः न एव च अर्जुन ॥

*nā 'tyaśnatas tu yogo 'sti na cai 'kāntam anaśnataḥ* ।
*na cā 'tisvapnaśīlasya jāgrato nai 'va cā 'rjuna* ॥

न *na* not अत्यश्नतः *atyaśnataḥ* of one who eats too much तु *tu* verily योगः *yogaḥ* yoga अस्ति *asti* is न *na* not च *ca* and एकान्तम् *ekāntaṁ* at all अनश्नतः *anaśnataḥ* of one who does not eat न *na* not च *ca* and अतिस्वप्नशीलस्य *ati svapna śīlasya* of one who sleeps too much जाग्रतः *jāgrataḥ* one who is awake न *na* not एव *eva* even च *ca* and अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

**Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much or for him who abstains too much from eating; it is not for him, O Arjuna, who sleeps too much or too little. 16**

The wire of a vina snaps if tightened too much and becomes devoid of music if loosened too much. In the art of partaking of food, the yogi is to act like a properly tuned vina bringing out the best music. If he over-eats he becomes a dullard; if he under-eats he becomes weak. In regard to the quantity

*svam* one's own दिश *diśaḥ* directions च *ca* and अनवलोकयन् *anavalokayan* not looking

**Let him hold the body, head and neck erect and still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking around. 13**

*When the body, head and neck are held erect, the* spinal cord becomes vertical. In this posture harmonized breathing takes place easily and freely and good thoughts come in naturally. The posture assumed for meditation should be firm, facile and deliberate. Consciousness of the body is got over in this manner. As the mind calms down in meditation, the eye-balls assume steadiness and seem as if they are gazing at the tip of the nose, while actually at rest. In meditation all modifications of the mind merge in the Self beaming as Bliss or as Pure Consciousness.

When a bird is brooding on her eggs for hatching, she puts on a vacant look taking no notice of things around her Even such is the case with the eyes of the yogi in meditation.

In meditation there is one-pointedness of the mind Then eyes see not and ears hear not, body becomes inert, as it were. Any snake crawling on the body is not sensed then by the yogi, nor does the snake apprehend any danger from its contact with the human body.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

If there be any trace of mentation while in meditation, how does the yogi engage that pacified mind? The blissful brooding is now dilated upon :—

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।
मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥१४

Physical exercise, as much as the spiritual *sadhanas*, is incumbent on the yogi; but it has to be resorted to, moderately. The duties of the yogi are very consequential and they have to be discharged meticulously and as regularly as the movements of the planets. The merit in him in the midst of these activities is, he is free from body-consciousness. Meditation therefore becomes easy and spontaneous to him. Pain is always associated with diseased body and mind. But the yogi takes no note of the body and he is sound in mind. Therefore yoga becomes the destroyer of pain to him.

When may it be said that the yogi is an adept in meditation? The clarification comes:—

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८

यदा वि-नि-यम्-तम् चित्तम् आत्मनि एव अव-तिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्व-कामेभ्यः युज्-तः इति उच्यते तदा ॥

*yadā viniyataṁ cittam ātmany evā 'vatiṣṭhate* ।
*niḥspṛhaḥ sarvakāmebhyo yukta ity ucyate tadā* ॥

यदा *yadā* when विनियतम् *viniyataṁ* perfectly controlled चित्तम् *cittaṁ* mind आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self एव *eva* only अवतिष्ठते *avatiṣṭhate* rests निःस्पृहः *niḥspṛhaḥ* free from longing सर्वकामेभ्यः *sarva kāmebhyaḥ* from all desires युक्तः *yuktaḥ* yogi इति *iti* thus उच्यते *ucyate* is said तदा *tadā* then

**When the disciplined mind rests in the Self alone, free from desire for objects, then is one said to be established in yoga. 18**

*Sreyas* or the good flowing out of yoga is explained now :—

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५

युञ्ज्-अन् एवम् सदा आत्मानम् योगी नि-यम्-त-मानस. ।
शान्तिम् निर् -वाण-परमाम् मद्-सम्-स्थाम् अधि-गच्छति ॥

*yuñjann evam sadā 'tmānam yogī niyatamānasaḥ* ।
*śāntim nirvānaparamām matsamsthām adhigacchati* ॥

युञ्जन् *yuñjan* balancing एवम् *evam* thus सदा *sadā* always आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self योगी *yogī* yogi नियतमानसः *niyata mānasaḥ* one with the controlled mind शान्तिम् *śāntim* to peace निर्वाणपरमाम् *nirvāṇa paramām* that which culminates in Nirvana (Moksha) मत्संस्थाम् *matsamsthām* abiding in me अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* attains

**Keeping himself ever steadfast in this manner, the yogi of subdued mind attains the Peace abiding in Me and culminating in Nirvana. 15**

Hunger is appeased by the one who partakes of food. The Peace of Blessedness comes to him who has reached the culmination of yoga. As heat is inherent in fire, Peace pertains to Paramatman. This Peace or *śānti* is synonymous with *mukti* or emancipation. And this is the fruit of yoga.

The one who newly visits a city must first procure a good lodging for himself Then he may roam about the city, seeing many interesting things If the lodging be not fixed first, at sunset he will have difficulties in that respect. Similarly, the man who has newly come into this world shall have to seek the everlasting shelter first at the feet of the Lord. Then he may

picture. When the mind of the yogi is completely sheltered against the wind of desire, the Self in him shines in its original splendour. He is to identify himself with that unbroken consciousness.

'*Mukti* is easy of access to the one deep and strong in meditation'—so goes the saying. Do you know when one is said to be perfect in meditation? When he sits in meditation, divine effulgence engulfs him. His little self merges into the Cosmic Self.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The other indications of advancement in yoga are as follows:—

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।
यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २०

यत्र उप-रम्-अते चित्तम् नि-रुध्-तम् योग-सेवया ।
यत्र च एव आत्मना आत्मानम् पश्-अन् आत्मनि तुष्-य-ति ॥

*yatro 'paramate cittaṁ niruddhaṁ yogasevayā ।*
*yatra cai 'vā 'tmanā 'tmānaṁ paśyann ātmani tuṣyati* ॥

यत्र *yatra* where उपरमते *uparamate* attains quietness चित्तम् *cittaṁ* mind निरुद्धम् *niruddhaṁ* restrained योगसेवया *yoga sevayā* by the practice of yoga यत्र *yatra* where च *ca* and एव *eva* only आत्मना *ātmanā* by the self आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the Self पश्यन् *paśyan* seeing आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self तुष्यति *tuṣyati* is satisfied

**When the mind, disciplined by the practice of yoga, attains quietude, and when beholding the Self by the self, he is satisfied in the Self; 20**

Quietude of mind and the experience of satisfaction in the Self are concomitant. Self-knowledge and Self-satisfaction are interrelated.

and sort of food, one's physique is not the standard for another's Each *sadhaka* has to fix them for himself Sleep brings rest and relaxation and tones the system, but over or under indulgence in it aggravates *Tamas* or inertia, which is a hindrance to the practice of meditation

Eat sumptuously in the day time, but let your food at night be sparse and easily digestible

A *sadhaka* ought to help himself to that food only which is not heating to the body and exciting to the mind

— Sri Ramakrishna

And what are they that conduce to yoga? They are delineated —

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७

युक्त आ हार-वि-हारस्य युक्त-चेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्त-स्वप्न-अव-बोधस्य योग भवति दु ख-हा ॥

*yuktāhāra vihārasya yukta cestasya karmasu* ।
*yukta svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkhahā* ॥

युक्त आहार विहारस्य *yukta ahāra vihārasya* of one who is moderate in eating and recreation (such as walking etc ) युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु *yukta cestasya karmasu* of one who is moderate in exertion in actions युक्त स्वप्न अवबोधस्य *yukta svapna avabodhasya* of one who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness योग *yogaḥ* yoga भवति *bhavati* becomes दु खहा *duhkhahā* the destroyer of pain

**For him who is moderate in eating and recreation, temperate in his actions, who is regulated in sleep and wakefulness, yoga becomes the destroyer of pain 17**

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥ २२

यम् लभ्-त्वा च अ-परम् लाभम् मन्-यते न अधिकम् ततः ।
यस्मिन् स्थितः न दुःखेन गुरुणा अपि वि-चाल्-यते ॥

*yaṁ labdhvā cā 'paraṁ lābhaṁ manyate nā 'dhikaṁ tataḥ* ।
*yasmin sthito na duḥkhena guruṇā 'pi vicālyate* ॥

यम् *yaṁ* which लब्ध्वा *labdhvā* having obtained च *ca* and अपरम् *aparaṁ* other लाभम् *lābhaṁ* gain मन्यते *manyate* thinks न *na* not अधिकम् *adhikaṁ* greater ततः *tataḥ* than that यस्मिन् *yasmin* in which स्थितः *sthitaḥ* established न *na* not दुःखेन *duḥkhena* by sorrow गुरुणा *guruṇā* (by) heavy अपि *api* even विचाल्यते *vicālyate* is moved

**And having gained which, he thinks that there is no greater gain than that, wherein established he is not shaken even by the heaviest affliction; 22**

The fleeting earthly pleasures are all ever selective. But getting into the infinite beatitude of the Self, the yogi has nothing else to seek, even as the fish in the ocean has no other abode to seek. The yogi established in the bliss of Brahman has no body-consciousness. The body hangs on him just as a shadow hangs on to a body. Any harm done to the shadow does not hurt the body; any harm inflicted on the body does not afflict the yogi established in the Self.

Whatever may be the suffering that falls to the lot of the body, the power and glory of the devotion and knowledge of a true devotee do not in the least get diminished thereby. What all tribulations the Pandava brothers had to undergo during

Wind creates storm in the sea. The wind of desire creates commotion in the mind. Desirelessness makes the mind constant and pure. Fixed in yoga is that mind which is impregnable against all desires. It rejoices exclusively in the Self. The yogi endowed with such a sterling mind is naturally an adept in meditation.

The mustard that gets scattered from a torn bag, cannot easily be gathered again Likewise, the mind dissipated in worldly things does not come under easy control. Possession of the mind in its entirety is yoga. — Sri Ramakrishna

The one-pointed mind is being defined now :—

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १९

यथा दीपः नि-वात-स्थ. न इङ्गते सा उपमा स्मृ-ता ।
योगिनः यम्-त-चित्तस्य युञ्जत· योगम् आत्मनः ॥

*yathā dīpo nivātastho ne 'ngate so 'pamā smṛtā |*
*yogino yatacittasya yuñjato yogam ātmanaḥ ||*

यथा *yathā* as दीप· *dīpaḥ* lamp निवातस्थ· *nivātasthaḥ* placed in a windless place न *na* not इङ्गते *ingate* flicker सा *sā* that उपमा *upamā* simile स्मृता *smṛtā* is thought योगिनः *yoginaḥ* of the yogi यतचित्तस्य *yata cittasya* of one with controlled mind युञ्जत· *yuñjataḥ* of the practising योगम् *yogam* the yoga आत्मन *ātmanaḥ* of the Self

**'As a lamp in a windless place does not flicker'— this is the simile used for the disciplined mind of a yogi practising concentration on the Self. 19**

The flame of a lamp in a place perfectly sheltered against wind, is as steady as the flame of a lamp in a

mind, fixed intention and constancy of purpose, achieves it. Sound mental climate is a prelude to the yogi's getting back to beatitude, his original state.

Milk in a vessel continues to boil and bubble so long as there is fire underneath. But when the fire is removed its simmering stops. On this wise, the man who takes to the practice of yoga out of curiosity pursues it vehemently for sometime and then abandons it once for all. He gains nothing. Steadfastness in yoga is essential.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The other traits of yoga are:—

सङ्कल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।
मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥ २४

सम्-कल्प-प्र-भवान् कामान् त्यज्-त्वा सर्वान् अ-शेषतः ।
मनसा एव इन्द्रिय-ग्रामम् वि-नि-यम्-य समन्ततः ॥

*saṁkalpa prabhavān kāmāṁs tyaktvā sarvān aśeṣataḥ* ।
*manasai 've 'ndriya grāmaṁ viniyamya samantataḥ* ॥

संकल्पप्रभवान् *saṁkalpa prabhavān* born of sankalpa (imagination) कामान् *kāmān* desires त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* having abandoned सर्वान् *sarvān* all अशेषतः *aśeṣataḥ* without reserve मनसा *manasā* by the mind एव *eva* even इन्द्रियग्रामम् *indriya grāmaṁ* the whole group of senses विनियम्य *viniyamya* completely restraining समन्ततः *samantataḥ* from all sides

**Abandoning without reserve all desires born of sankalpa, and curbing in, by the mind, all the senses from all sides; 24**

The formative thought lurking in the mind is *sankalpa*. It is this seed of *sankalpa* that sprouts and grows into the plant of desire. The desire that is like a spark today is capable of developing into a

**Progress in Yoga — 21-28**

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१

सुखम् आत्यन्तिकम् यत् तत् बुद्धि-ग्राह्यम् अति-इन्द्रियम् ।
वेत्ति यत्र न च एव अयम् स्थितः चलति तत्त्वतः ॥

*sukham ātyantikaṁ yat tad buddhigrāhyam atīndriyam*
*vetti yatra na cai 'vā 'yaṁ sthitaś calati tattvataḥ* ॥

सुखम् *sukhaṁ* bliss आत्यन्तिकम् *ātyantikaṁ* infinite यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that बुद्धिग्राह्यम् *buddhi grāhyaṁ* that which can be grasped by reason अतीन्द्रियम् *atīndriyaṁ* transcending the senses वेत्ति *vetti* knows यत्र *yatra* where न *na* not च *ca* and एव *eva* even अयम् *ayaṁ* this स्थित *sthitaḥ* established चलति *calati* moves तत्त्वत: *tattvataḥ* from the Reality

**When he feels that supreme bliss which is perceived by the intelligence and which transcends the senses, and wherein established he never moves from the Reality ; 21**

Bliss is the characteristic of the Atman; therefore the extroverted senses cannot have access to it. Purified intellect grasps it to some extent. Bliss is everlasting because of its belonging to the Atman. The yogi does not want to divert himself from this bliss to the impermanent pleasures of the senses any more than the fish wants to get to land abandoning its watery abode.

While in Samadhi the yogi dives deep into the ocean of *sat-chit-ananda* In that state his senses become defunct.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

the Self, it ceases to deviate into sense-indulgence. Constant thought of the Lord excludes all other thoughts from the mind.

Mind is the main factor in you. As is your mind, so are you. It may be compared to a washed white cloth which is capable of taking any dye dipped in. When you have learnt a new language you cannot help uttering a few words from it in your conversation. Contact with the undesirables contaminates the mind. Holy company on the other hand elevates it.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Since the Lord has sanctioned the attainment of quietude little by little, the *sadhaka* is likely to lapse into mediocrity. He may slacken his endeavours with the consolation that in some distant future at least, he will attain perfection in yoga. But such a set back is not sanctioned by the Lord. He exhorts:—

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ २६

यतः यतः निस्-चरति मनः चञ्चलम् अ-स्थिरम् ।
ततः ततः नि-यम्-य एतत् आत्मनि एव वशम् नय-येत् ॥

*yato-yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram* ।
*tatas-tato niyamyai 'tad ātmany eva vaśaṁ nayet* ॥

यतः यतः *yataḥ-yataḥ* from whatever cause निश्चरति *niścarati* wanders away मनः *manaḥ* mind चञ्चलम् *cañcalaṁ* restless अस्थिरम् *asthiraṁ* unsteady ततः ततः *tataḥ-tataḥ* from that नियम्य *niyamya* having restrained एतत् *etat* this आत्मनि *ātmani* in the Self एव *eva* alone वशम् *vaśaṁ* (under)control नयेत् *nayet* let (him) bring

**By whatever cause the wavering and unsteady mind wanders away, let him curb it from that and subjugate it solely to the Self. 26**

their exile! But the exuberance of their wisdom was in no way affected even for a moment by those ordeals

— Sri Ramakrishna

तं विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३

तम् विद्-यात् दु ख सयोग वियोगम् योग-सज्ञितम् ।
स निस्-चयेन योज् तव्य योग अ-निर् -विण्ग चेतमा ॥

*tam vidyād duhkhasamyogaviyogam yogasamjñitam* ।
*sa niścayena yoktavyo yogo 'nirvinna cetasā* ॥

तम् *tam* that विद्यात् *vidyāt* let (him) know दु खसयोग वियोगम् *duḥkha samyoga viyogam* a state of severance from union with pain योगसज्ञितम् *yoga samjñitam* called yoga स *sah* that निश्चयेन *niścayena* with determination योक्तव्य *yoktavyah* should be practised योग *yogaḥ* yoga अनिर्विण्णचेतसा *anirvinna cetasā* with undesponding mind

**Let this disconnection from union with pain be known by the name of yoga. This yoga should be practised with determination and with an undistracted mind. 23**

Bliss is the real nature of man It is because of ignorance that he courts misery and suffers under its weight When this assumed state of affair is alienated, he beams in his original bliss again This act is like rousing up a man from the pangs of a dreadful dream and putting him again in his wakeful state The meaning of yoga is to yoke one with one's supreme nature There is no justification for anybody to invite sorrow on himself That person who makes himself over to affliction is unfit for yoga He who takes to yoga with buoyancy of

**Supreme Bliss verily comes to that yogi whose mind is calm; whose passions are pacified, who has become one with Brahman and who is sinless. 27**

It is the category of *Rajas* that creates passion, the source of all afflictions. When the impetus of *Rajas* cools down, calmness of mind comes in as a matter of course. He who cognizes everything as Brahman becomes himself Brahman. The one in *Brahmāvastha* is actionless, and as such there is no sin for him.

Before visiting the humble home of a tenant of his, the landlord sends in advance the required furniture and provision, so that the occupant may receive him in a fitting manner. Similarly, before the Lord reveals Himself in the heart of a devotee, He endows him with purity, devotion, faith and such like divine qualities.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ २८

युज्-अन् एवम् सदा आत्मानम् योगी वि-गम्-त-कल्मषः ।
सुखेन ब्रह्म-सम्-स्पर्शम् अति-अन्तम् सुखम् अश्-नु-ते ॥

*yuñjann evaṁ sadā 'tmānaṁ yogī vigata kalmaṣaḥ |*
*sukhena brahma saṁsparśam atyantaṁ sukham aśnute ||*

युञ्जन् *yuñjan* practising yoga एवम् *evaṁ* thus सदा *sadā* always आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the self योगी *yogī* yogi विगतकल्मषः *vigatakalmaṣaḥ* freed from sin सुखेन *sukhena* easily ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शम् *brahma saṁsparśaṁ* caused by contact with Brahman अत्यन्तम् *atyantaṁ* infinite सुखम् *sukhaṁ* bliss अश्नुते *aśnute* enjoys

conflagration tomorrow. It is therefore to be entirely eliminated with the weapons of discrimination and dispassion The senses are safe only when freed from desire.

However carefully a man may move about in a room full of soot, his clothes are bound to be stained a little at least. In the same way he who lives in the midst of sense-objects is bound to be tainted with a trace at least of lust

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥ २५

शनैः शनैः उप-रमेत् बुद्ध्या धृति-गृहीतया ।
आत्म संस्थम् मनः कृ-त्वा न किम्-चित् अपि चिन्त्-अयेत् ॥

*śanaiḥ-śanair uparamed buddhyā dhṛtigṛhītayā* ।
*ātmasaṃstham manaḥ kṛtvā na kiṃcid api cintayet* ॥

शनैः *śanaiḥ* gradually शनैः *śanaiḥ* gradually उपरमेत् *uparamet* let him attain quietude बुद्ध्या *buddhyā* by the intellect धृतिगृहीतया *dhṛti gṛhītayā* held in firmness आत्मसंस्थम् *ātma saṃstham* placed in the Self मनः *manaḥ* the mind कृत्वा *kṛtvā* having made न *na* not किंचित् *kiṃcit* anything अपि *api* even चिन्तयेत् *cintayet* let him think

**With his intellect set in firmness let him attain quietude little by little; with the mind fixed on the Self let him not think of anything. 25**

*Dhṛti* or firmness is a virtue born of disciplined life. Some are smart enough to distinguish academically between the permanent and the impermanent. But in the day to day life they are slaves to the impermanent sense-pleasure. As mind gets fixed in

by yoga सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere समदर्शनः *sama darśanaḥ* one who sees the same

**His mind being harmonized by yoga, he sees himself in all beings and all beings in himself; he sees the same in all.** **29**

Separateness is not for him who has progressed high in yoga. The distinction between the high and the low, the angel and the humble creature vanishes from his mind. He sees the same divinity in all. In his intuition the Self in him is the Self in all and the Self in all is the Self in him. The individualized selves do all merge into one universal Self. This is his realization.

Assuming individuality to oneself is like putting a dam to a portion of the Ganga and claiming the little water in it as one's own. — **Sri Ramakrishna**

If all the *Jivatmas* are actually one cosmic entity, then what is the relationship between this commingled entity and the Paramatman? The truth is declared :—

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३०

यः माम् पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वम् च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्य अहम् न प्र-नश्-यामि सः च मे न प्र-नश्-यति ॥

*yo māṁ paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati* ।
*tasyā 'haṁ na praṇaśyāmi sa ca me na praṇaśyati* ॥

यः *yaḥ* who माम् *māṁ* me पश्यति *paśyati* sees सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all च *ca* and मयि *mayi* in me पश्यति *paśyati* sees तस्य *tasya* of him अहम् *ahaṁ* I न *na* not प्रणश्यामि *praṇaśyāmi* vanish सः *saḥ*

There are miscreants who, while posing to act within the bounds of law, try to circumvent it to their selfish ends. Mind plays the same mischief while yet in the process of subjugation. When weaned away from one object, it gets unwittingly attached to another. With proper discrimination it has to be saved from several pitfalls and placed safely at the feet of the Lord. This is the purport of His exhorting the attainment of calmness stage by stage. The danger of a fall is possible until the mind is completely made over to the Lord.

The vision of the Lord is not possible as long as even an iota of desire is left lingering in the mind. You ought to, therefore, fulfil the innocent and harmless little desires before doing away with them and to mercilessly exterminate the baneful ones with the sword of discrimination

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

What is the aftermath of wiping out all desires? The result is recounted :—

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ २७

प्र-शान्त-मनसम् हि एनम् योगिनम् सुखम् उत्तमम् ।
उप-एति शान्त-रजसम् ब्रह्म-भूतम् अ-कल्मषम् ॥

*praśāntamanasam hy enam yoginam sukham uttamam*
*upaiti śānta rajasam brahma bhūtam akalmasam* ||

प्रशान्तमनसम् *praśānta manasam* one of peaceful mind हि *hi* verily एनम् *enam* this योगिनम् *yoginam* yogi सुखम् *sukham* bliss उत्तमम् *uttamam* supreme उपैति *upaiti* comes शान्तरजसम् *śānta rajasam* one whose passion is quieted ब्रह्मभूतम् *brahma bhūtam* Brahman-become अकल्मषम् *akalmaṣam* one who is free from sin

एकत्वम् *ekatvaṁ* in unity आस्थित: *āsthitaḥ* established, सर्वथा *sarvathā* in every way वर्तमान: *vartamānaḥ* remaining अपि *api* also स: *saḥ* that योगी *yogī* yogi मयि *mayi* in me वर्तते *vartate* abides

**He who, established in oneness, worships Me abiding in all beings, that yogi lives in Me, whatever may be his mode of living. 31**

A person discharged from prison is conscious that he is no more a prisoner, be he shut up in a room, enchained, handcuffed or tethered. Not the external setting but the attitude of the man is the main factor here. The knower of Brahman is conscious that Brahman alone is putting on the appearance of the many in the universe. Because of the *Brahmāvastha* in which he is established, his contact with beings is nothing short of the adoration of Brahman. His external behaviour may indicate that he is meditating, attending to the obligatory duties, or, taking rest. But subjectively he is fixed in Brahman. This is the state of liberation from all bondage. This state is technically known as *Sahaja nishṭha.*

The ignorant one believes that God is in some far off region called heaven. The enlightened one, on the other hand, beholds Him as the core of his own being. Iswara is in the hearts of all. The seeker of God therefore realizes Him first within himself.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The merit of the enlightened yogi is :—

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ।। ३२

**Constantly engaging the mind this way, the yogi who has put away sin, attains with ease the infinite bliss of contact with Brahman. 28**

Mythology has it that there is such a thing as the philosopher's stone, contact with which converts base metal into gold But this is an allegorical statement Brahman is the real philosopher's stone It is not easily accessible to all, but whosoever gets at It becomes transformed Ordinary souls who are base become adorable ones after their contact with Brahman They become heirs to infinite bliss

An immersed vessel is permeated by water inside as well as outside The soul immersed in Iswara cognizes Pure Consciousness everywhere —Sri Ramakrishna

Is there any change of vision of the world effected in the one who realizes himself as Atman? The answer is given —

**Perfection in Yoga — 29-32**

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ २९

सर्व-भूत स्थम् आत्मानम् सर्व-भूतानि च आत्मनि ।
ईक्ष्-अते योग युक्त-आत्मा सर्वत्र सम-दर्शन ॥

*sarvabhūtastham ātmānam sarvabhūtāni cā 'tmani ।*
*īkṣate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarśanaḥ ॥*

सर्वभूतस्थम् *sarva bhūta stham* abiding in all beings आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self सर्वभूतानि *sarva bhūtāni* all beings च *ca* and आत्मनि *ātmani* in the self ईक्षते *īkṣate* sees योगयुक्तात्मा *yoga yuktātmā* one who is harmonized

on behalf of the helpless victim. But the landlord now directed his fury on the holy man and thrashed him to the point of making him fall down unconscious. Coming to know of this mishap the inmates of the Ashrama hastened to the spot and carried the holy man back, lying yet unconscious. When, after a long nursing, the saint opened his eyes, a tending man put the question, "Revered one, do you recognize who I am?" In gentle but clear voice came the unexpected answer, "The hand that beat then is now nursing." He said so because he saw the same Brahman manifesting as the many. The feeling of the offender and offended was not in the saint.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

A doubt now rose in the mind of Arjuna :—

**The Restive Mind has to be Resisted — 33-36**

अर्जुन उवाच

योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥ ३३

यः अयम् योगः त्वया प्र-उक्तः साम्येन मधु-सूदन ।
एतस्य अहम् न पश्यामि चञ्चल-त्वात् स्थितिम् स्थिराम् ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*yo 'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ sāmyena madhusūdana* ।
*etasyā 'haṁ na paśyāmi cañcalatvāt sthitiṁ sthirām* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

यः *yaḥ* which अयम् *ayaṁ* this योगः *yogaḥ* yoga त्वया *tvayā* by thee प्रोक्तः *proktaḥ* taught साम्येन *sāmyena* by equanimity मधुसूदन *madhusūdana* O slayer of Madhu एतस्य *etasya* its अहम् *ahaṁ* I न *na* not पश्यामि *paśyāmi* see चञ्चलत्वात् *cañcalatvāt* from restlessness स्थितिम् *sthitiṁ* continuance स्थिराम् *sthirāṁ* steady

he च *ca* and मे *me* to me न *na* not प्रणश्यति *pranaśyati* vanishes

**He who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, he never becomes lost to Me, nor do I become lost to him** **30**

After realizing the unity of all beings the yogi further realizes that it is the Paramatman that manifests Himself as the multitudinous beings at all levels The One appearing as the many is not merely the yogi's imagination It is the eternal sport of the Lord He and His manifestations are interrelated as the ocean and the waves on it He is therefore not lost to the Lord and the Lord is not lost to him

Sweetmeats in the shape of various animals birds and men are made from the same stuff, sugar Likewise it is the Sat chitananda that has assumed the forms of the sentient and insentient in the universe

—Sri Ramakrishna

This realization being steady, the relationship between the yogi and Paramatman is further elucidated —

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ ३१

सर्व भूत-स्थितम् य माम् भज्-अति एक-त्वम् आस्था-त ।
सर्वथा वर्त् अमान अपि स योगी मयि वर्त्-अते ॥

*sarvabhuta sthitam yo mām bhajaty ekatvam āsthitaḥ* ।
*sarvathā vartamāno 'pi sa yogī mayi vartate* ॥

सर्वभूतस्थितम् *sarva bhuta sthitam* abiding in all beings य *yaḥ* who माम् *mām* me भजति *bhajati* worships

tiger it hurts the victims. It is therefore as dangerous to people as the tiger is. Hence is the mind held to be turbulent and as strong as the tiger. It is possible to weaken a tiger by subjecting him to starvation; but the case of the mind is otherwise. In the manner in which a starved out leech develops toughness of its skin and resists being cleft, the mind put to privation develops obstinacy. If what it wants be not provided for, it turns petulant and scheming. Further experience makes it plain that mind is as uncontrollable as the wind. But modern man has found out the ways and means of controlling the wind to a great extent. Whereas control of the mind it is, that ever baffles man's understanding.

Krishna alone is capable of taming the formidable mind. His name itself indicates his capacity to do this. The first part of his name '*Krish*' means "to plough and process"; the latter part "*na*" means "the lord of." He is the Lord of the act of ploughing and processing the mind.

The way of culturing the mind is shown by the Lord:—

श्री भगवानुवाच

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५

अ-सं-शयम् महा-बाहो मनः दुः-नि-ग्रहम् चलम् ।
अभि-आसेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्-यते ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*asaṁśayaṁ mahābāho mano durnigrahaṁ calam |*
*abhyāsena tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gṛhyate ||*

आत्म-औपम्येन सर्वत्र समम् पश्य्-अ-ति य अर्जुन ।
सुखम् वा यदि वा दुःखम् स योगी परम मन्-त ॥

*ātmaupamyena sarvatra samam paśyati yo 'rjuna* ।
*sukham vā yadi vā duḥkham sa yogī paramo mataḥ* ॥

आत्मौपम्येन *ātmaupamyena* through the likeness of the self सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere समम् *samam* equality पश्यति *paśyati* sees य *yaḥ* who अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna सुखम् *sukham* pleasure वा *vā* and यदि *yadi* if वा *vā* or दुःखम् *duḥkham* pain स. *saḥ* he योगी *yogī* yogi परम *paramaḥ* highest मत *mataḥ* is regarded

**That yogi, O Arjuna, is regarded as the supreme, who judges pleasure or pain everywhere, by the same standard as he applies to himself. 32**

Man does not differentiate between the limbs of his own body as high and low. They are all of equal importance to him The harm done to any limb is the harm done to himself, because he and his limb are one and the same. An ordinary man is unassailable in this conviction of his The yogi, in his turn, beholds the cosmos as the body of the Paramatman and himself a limb of that Cosmic Personality. One limb in a body does not hurt another, all the limbs function for mutual welfare The yogi knows that he and his neighbours are not different, they are all limbs of the same Iswara. So he works for the general welfare of all. That yogi is supreme who has this cosmic outlook.

A few holy men were living in an Ashrama in the outskirts of a township While the oldest of them was passing through the main street of that village, he chanced to see a landlord mercilessly belabouring a tenant of his The holy man intervened

wiped out through discrimination, mind blooms into serenity. Practice of non-attachment is therefore auxiliary to the practice of meditation.

He who wants to learn swimming has to be at it repeatedly. It cannot be learnt with one or two attempts. One dares not swim in the boisterous sea just after a day's practice. Similarly one has to train oneself much to swim in the sea of *Sat-chit-ananda*. Failure in the first attempt is but natural. Sporting in it becomes possible only through persistent practice.

There is a poisonous variety of spider the effect of the bite of which cannot easily be cured. A spell has to be cast first over the patient with the root of turmeric; otherwise no medicine will have any effect on the poison. The worldly man is bitten by the spider of lust and greed. Unless the spell of non-attachment be invoked on him, no spiritual practice of his will ever bear fruit.
—**Sri Ramakrishna**

To whom is yoga possible and to whom else is it impossible? The scope is clarified :—

**असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।**
**वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ ३६**

अ-सम्-यम्-त-आत्मना योगः दुस्-प्रापः इति मे मतिः ।
वश्य-आत्मना तु यत्-अता शक्यः अव-आप्-तुम् उपायतः ॥

*asaṁyatātmanā yogo duṣprāpa iti me matiḥ* ।
*vaśyātmanā tu yatatā śakyo 'vāptum upāyataḥ* ॥

असंयतात्मना *asaṁyatātmanā* by a man of uncontrolled self योगः *yogaḥ* yoga दुष्प्रापः *duṣprāpaḥ* hard to attain इति *iti* thus मे *me* my मतिः *matiḥ* opinion वश्यात्मना *vaśyātmanā* by the self-controlled one तु *tu* but यतता *yatatā* by the striving one शक्यः *śakyaḥ* possible अवाप्तुम् *avāptuṁ* to obtain उपायतः *upāyataḥ* by (proper) means

**Arjuna said :**

**This yoga of equanimity, taught by you, O Madhusudana — I do not see any stability for it, because of restlessness. 33**

Because of the dispersed and restless nature of mind, its being collected in equanimity is not possible. The wavy ocean of the mind cannot be made waveless; this is the objection raised.

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ ३४

चञ्चलम् हि मनः कृष्ण प्र-माथि बल-वत् दृढम् ।
तस्य अहम् नि-ग्रहम् मन्-ये वायोः इव सु-दुस्-करम् ॥

*cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham* |
*tasyā 'haṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyor iva suduṣkaram* ||

चञ्चलम् *cañcalaṁ* restless हि *hi* verily मनः *manaḥ* the mind कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna प्रमाथि *pramāthi* turbulent बलवत् *balavat* strong दृढम् *dṛḍham* unyielding तस्य *tasya* of it अहम् *ahaṁ* I निग्रहम् *nigraham* control मन्ये *manye* think वायोः *vāyoḥ* of the wind इव *iva* as सुदुष्करम् *suduṣkaram* difficult to do

**The mind verily is, O Krishna, restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate. I deem it as hard to control as the wind. 34**

All the unwholesome characteristics of the mind are contained in this question raised by Arjuna. Mind is labelled as restless due to its constant shifting its interest from object to object. It is as fickle as the deer. But this animal causes harm to none. Whereas the way of the mind is different; like the

मानसः *calita mānasaḥ* one whose mind wanders away अप्राप्य *aprāpya* not having attained योगसंसिद्धिम् *yogasaṁ siddhiṁ* perfection in yoga काम् *kāṁ* which गतिम् *gatiṁ* end कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna गच्छति *gacchati* meets

**Arjuna said:**

**He who is unable to control himself, though possessed of faith, whose mind deviates from yoga, what end does he meet with, O Krishna, having failed to attain perfection in yoga? 37**

The *sadhaka* is imbued with the faith that yoga leads to perfection. But he has not got the required firmness of the mind. He has not therefore attained the goal of yoga. What becomes of him who dies foiled in the attempt?

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ ३८

कच्चित् न उभय-वि-भ्रष्टः छिद्-त-अभ्रम् इव नश्-यति ।
अ-प्रतिष्ठः महा-बाहो वि-मुह्-तः ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥

*kaccin no 'bhayavibhraṣṭaś chinnābhram iva naśyati* ।
*apratiṣṭho mahābāho vimūḍho brahmaṇaḥ pathi* ॥

कच्चित् *kaccit* is it that? न *na* not उभयविभ्रष्टः *ubhaya vibhraṣṭaḥ* fallen from both छिन्न *chinna* rent अभ्रम् *abhraṁ* cloud इव *iva* like नश्यति *naśyati* perishes अप्रतिष्ठः *apratiṣṭhaḥ* supportless महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed विमूढः *vimūḍhaḥ* deluded ब्रह्मणः *brahmaṇaḥ* of Brahman पथि *pathi* in the path

**Fallen from both, does he not perish like a rent cloud, without any hold, O mighty-armed, deluded in the path of Brahman? 38**

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said·

असंशयम् *asamśayam* undoubtedly महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed मन *manaḥ* the mind दुर्निग्रहम् *durnigraham* difficult of control चलम् *calam* restless अभ्यासेन *abhyāsena* by practice तु *tu* but कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya वैराग्येण *vairāgyena* by dispassion च *ca* and गृह्यते *grhyate* is restrained

**The Blessed Lord said**

**Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and hard to control; but by practice and non-attachment, O son of Kunti, it can be controlled. 35**

The sum total of the habits of a man is his nature. It has come about as a result of his giving himself over to the bent of his mind. Unwillingly he has become the creature of his own mind, wonted to restlessness. But the old habits can be eradicated through new ones. In other words nature can be changed through nurture. An earnest and persistent attempt at the change of nature is *abhyāsa* or practice The uncontrollable and restless mind can be controlled and made calm Practice is the sure means to this end. To wean the mind from its wonted ways and direct it on the ideal is practice. Mind becomes pacified as it gets drawn to the Self.

On analysis it may be found that mind runs after those objects to which it has been attached. The evils of such attachments have to be repeatedly and timely presented to the passionate mind. As the force of passion gets put down, mind comes under control. When all the base attachments are

Who is whose *guru*? None but Iswara alone can play the role of the *guru*.

Nothing is impossible to the Incarnation of Iswara. The intricate problems pertaining to the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman are all easily solved by Him. Even a child can easily understand His teachings. He is the sun of knowledge that drives away the darkness of ignorance accumulated through the ages. — Sri Ramakrishna

श्री भगवानुवाच

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ ४०

पार्थ न एव इह न अमुत्र वि-नाशः तस्य विद्-यते ।
न हि कल्याण-कृत् कः-चित् दुः-गतिम् तात गच्छति ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*pārtha nai 've 'ha nā 'mutra vināśas tasya vidyate* ।
*na hi kalyāṇakṛt kaścid durgatiṁ tāta gacchati* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha न *na* not एव *eva* verily इह *iha* here न *na* not अमुत्र *amutra* in the next world विनाशः *vināśaḥ* destruction तस्य *tasya* of him विद्यते *vidyate* is न *na* not हि *hi* verily कल्याणकृत् *kalyāṇakṛt* he who does good कश्चित् *kaścit* anyone दुर्गतिम् *durgatiṁ* bad state or grief तात *tāta* O my son गच्छति *gacchati* goes

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**O Partha, neither in this world nor in the next is there destruction for him; for, the doer of good, O my son, never comes to grief. 40**

The word *tāta* means father. It is father who has become the son. Therefore a junior or a son is addressed as *tāta* indicating affection. The disciple

**Yoga is hard to attain, I concede, by a man who cannot control himself; but it can be attained by him who has controlled himself and who strives by right means. 36**

The man of self-control is he who either thinks wholesome thoughts or does not allow mentation of any kind taking place in himself. He strives by right means who applies himself steadily to practice and non-attachment.

"In those days when I took to spiritual practices I would first cleanse the mind of all earthly thoughts, make it as pure as purity itself and then invoke the presence of the Lord in it. May you also do the same!" —Sri Ramakrishna

A doubt now rises in the mind of Arjuna in regard to the aspirant who falls short of perfection in yoga. He raises his question as follows :—

The Fate of the Imperfect Yogi — 37-45

अर्जुन उवाच

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।
अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥ ३७

अ-यतिः श्रद्धया उप-इतः योगात् चलित-मानस. ।
अ-प्र-आप्-य योग-सं-सिध्-तिम् काम् गतिम् कृष्ण गम् (गच्छ्)-अति ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*ayatih śraddhayo 'peto yogāc calitamānasah* ।
*aprāpya yogasamsiddhim kām gatim kṛṣna gacchati* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

अयतिः *ayatiḥ* uncontrolled श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* by faith उपेतः *upetaḥ* possessed योगात् *yogāt* from yoga चलित

**Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and having lived there for countless years, he who falls from yoga is reborn in the house of the pure and prosperous. 41**

*Bhoga*—enjoyment and yoga are exclusive of each other. Where the one is, the other is not. He falls from yoga, who covets *bhoga*. Such a fallen yogi goes to heaven and enjoys celestial pleasures for a very long time. He then takes his birth again on earth in the house of the pure and prosperous, it being conducive to secular requirements and sacred pursuits. According to the law of karma, souls reincarnate in the environments befitting their attainments.

There is another type among those who fall from yoga. His destiny is being described now :—

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ ४२

अथ वा योगिनाम् एव कुले भव्-अति धी-मताम् ।
एतत् हि दुर्-लभ-तरम् लोके जन्म यत् ईदृशम् ॥

*athavā yogināṁ eva kule bhavati dhīmatāṁ* ।
*etadd hi durlabhataraṁ loke janma yad īdṛśam* ॥

अथवा *athavā* or योगिनाम् *yogināṁ* of yogis एव *eva* even कुले *kule* in the family भवति *bhavati* is born धीमताम् *dhīmatāṁ* of the wise एतत् *etat* this हि *hi* verily दुर्लभतरम् *dur labhataraṁ* very difficult लोके *loke* in the world जन्म *janma* birth यत् *yat* which ईदृशम् *īdṛśaṁ* like this

The rent cloud does not descend on earth as rainfall; it loses its distinctiveness in the firmament. Even such is the fate of the one fallen in yoga. He has neither the here nor the hereafter. Having renounced the sense-pleasures which are all of the earth, he happens to be one who has lost the here; and in not having obtained the beatitude born of the perfection in yoga he is bereft of the hereafter, the path of Brahman. This is how he becomes fallen from both. Can there be a plight more painful than this?

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।
त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥ ३९

एतत् मे सं-शयम् कृष्ण छेत्-तुम् अर्ह्-अ सि अ-शेष-तः ।
त्वत् अन्यः सम्-शयस्य अस्य छेत्ता न हि उप-पद्-यते ॥

*etan me samśayam kṛṣṇa chettum arhasy aśeṣataḥ* ।
*tvadanyaḥ saṁśayasyā 'sya chettā na hy upapadyate* ॥

एतत् *etat* this मे *me* my संशयम् *samśayam* doubt कृष्ण *kṛsna* O Krishna छेत्तुम् *chettum* to dispel अर्हसि *arhasi* oughtest अशेषत: *aśesatah* completely त्वत् *tvat* than thou अन्य. *anyah* another संशयस्य *samśayasya* of doubt अस्य *asya* of this छेत्ता *chettā* dispeller न *na* not हि *hi* verily उपपद्यते *upapadyate* is fit

**Deign to dispel completely this doubt of mine, O Krishna; for there is none but Yourself who can destroy this doubt. 39**

Even the *Devas* and *Rishis* come nowhere near You in dispelling the darkness; for You are the omniscient Iswara. All the intricacies of yoga are best known to none but You.

birth. Facilities for the fulfilment of those sinless desires are in abundance in the new setting. No sooner are the guiltless pleasures gone through than this aspirant takes to the practice of yoga. But that yogi who is born in the family of wise yogis has a better start. The favourable environment draws out the latent yoga elements in him. He feels as though he were going through the old lessons again. His inborn tendency ministered by the helpful surroundings, leads him on rapidly towards the ideal.

Swami Vivekananda and his *guru* Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa were perfect yogis born solely for the salvation of mankind. It is very striking to note that the former was born in the house of the pure and prosperous and the latter in a family of a wise yogi.

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव ह्रियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४

पूर्व-अभि-आसेन तेन एव ह्रि-यते हि अ-वशः अपि सः ।
जि-ज्ञासुः अपि योगस्य शब्द-ब्रह्म अति-वर्तते ॥

*pūrvābhyāsena tenai 'va hriyate hy avaśo 'pi saḥ* ।
*jijñāsur api yogasya śabdabrahmā 'tivartate* ॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन *pūrvābhyāsena* former practice तेन *tena* by that एव *eva* verily ह्रियते *hriyate* is borne हि *hi* indeed अवशः *avaśaḥ* helpless अपि *api* even सः *saḥ* he जिज्ञासुः *jijñāsuḥ* he who wishes to know yoga अपि *api* even योगस्य *yogasya* of yoga शब्दब्रह्म *śabda brahma* word-Brahman अतिवर्तते *ativartate* goes beyond

**By that very former practice he is led on in spite of himself. Even he who merely wishes to know of yoga rises superior to the performer of Vedic rites. 44**

is to the *guru* what the son is to the father. Therefore it is customary for the *guru* to address the disciple as son or as *tāta*. The Lord addressing Arjuna this way is a mark of the flow of grace.

It is open to people to inquire whether this world is intrinsically good or bad. God it is that is revealing Himself as the phenomenon. The world therefore cannot be anything but good. Viewing it as filled with evil is a misnomer. One of the profoundest pronouncements of the Lord is, "THE DOER OF GOOD NEVER COMES TO GRIEF." And the devotees of the Lord are ever the standing testimony to this fact. A *sadhaka* who slips from yoga never falls to a state inferior to what he has already attained. This fact is clarified thus :—

> A man gets his desert in tune with his mental make up The Lord is the *kalpataru* the fabled desire-fulfilling tree to the devotees
>
> — **Sri Ramakrishna**

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ ४१

प्र आप्-य पुण्य कृताम् लोकान् (वस) उष्-इत्वा शाश्वती समा ।
शुचीनाम् श्री मताम् गेहे योग भ्रष्ट अभि (जन्) जायते ॥

*prāpya punyakṛtām lokān usitvā śāśvatīh samāh* ।
*śucīnām śrīmatām gehe yogabhrasto 'bhijāyate* ॥

प्राप्य *prāpya* having attained पुण्यकृताम् *punyakṛtām* of the righteous लोकान् *lokān* worlds उषित्वा *usitvā* having dwelt शाश्वतीः *śāśvatīḥ* everlasting समा *samāh* years शुचीनाम् *sucīnām* of the pure श्रीमताम् *śrīmatām* of the wealthy गेहे *gehe* in the house योगभ्रष्ट *yoga bhraṣtah* one fallen from yoga अभिजायते *abhijāyate* is born

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५

प्र-यत्नात् यत-मानः तु योगी सम्-शुध्-त-किल्बिषः ।
अन्-एक-जन्म-सम्-सिध्-तः ततः या-ति पराम् गतिम् ॥

*prayatnād yatamānas tu yogī saṁśuddhakilbiṣaḥ* ।
*aneka janma saṁsiddhas tato yāti parāṁ gatim* ॥

प्रयत्नात् *prayatnāt* with assiduity यतमानः *yatamānaḥ* striving तु *tu* but योगी *yogī* the yogi संशुद्धकिल्बिषः *saṁśuddha kilbiṣaḥ* purified from sins अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धः *aneka janma saṁsiddhaḥ* perfected through many births ततः *tataḥ* then याति *yāti* reaches पराम् *parāṁ* the highest गतिम् *gatiṁ* path

**The yogi who strives with assiduity, purified from sins and perfected through many births reaches then the Supreme Goal. 45**

Learning and wealth cannot be acquired in a day or two. One has to apply oneself to them constantly. But one is held to be learned in a measure even while in the process of studying. Similarly, one is also held as a man of means even while yet earning money. A man is likewise beheld as a yogi even when he is assiduously practising it. Learning, wealth and spirituality developed by these several individuals never go to waste. Spirituality in particular persists and progresses in the yogi through successive births. As he gets purified from sins he ceases to be affected by the inevitable fluctuations in the earthly life. Constancy of the ideal in the midst of all eventualities is his characteristic. His serenity steadily evolves into Beatitude which is the Supreme

**Or he is born in a family of wise yogis only; a birth like this is verily very difficult to obtain in this world. 42**

Yoga continues to be practised birth after birth until perfection is reached. The environment of the parentage obtained for this purpose is necessarily congenial. Of the two types of favourable families, that of the wise yogis is superior to that of the pure and prosperous. The how of it is being explained now:—

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३

तत्र तम् बुद्धि-सं-योगम् लभ्-अ-ते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।
यतते च ततः भूयः सम्-सिध्-तौ कुरु-नन्दन ॥

*tatra tam buddhi samyogam labhate paurva dehikam* ।
*yatate ca tato bhūyaḥ saṁsiddhau kuru nandana* ॥

तत्र *tatra* there तम् *tam* that बुद्धिसंयोगम् *buddhi samyogam* union with knowledge लभते *labhate* obtains पौर्वदेहिकम् *paurva dehikam* acquired in his former body यतते *yatate* strives च *ca* and ततः *tatah* than that भूयः *bhūyaḥ* more संसिद्धौ *samsiddhau* for perfection कुरुनन्दन *kuru nandana* O son of Kurus

**There he regains the knowledge acquired in his former body, and he strives more than before for perfection, O joy of the Kurus. 43**

The prospective yogi born in the house of the pure and prosperous begins his new life with the enjoyment of some harmless pleasures which he innocently harboured in his heart in the previous

a yogi. And he is a yogi who is consciously and deliberately moving towards Divinity which is the plan and purpose of creation. As a man advances in yoga his mind gets purified and thus becomes all powerful.

An ascetic is one who undergoes a voluntary mortification to obtain celestial powers and enjoyments here and hereafter. The ritualist also has this aim in mind. But instead of self-mortification he chooses to appease and propitiate the favours of the celestials to this end. So he performs the elaborate rituals mentioned in the Vedas, putting complete faith in them. But the yogi's case is simple, natural, direct and to the point. In and through desirelessness he comes close to the Supreme Goal—*Parām Gatim*. If, however, a patch of cloud of desire happens to pass through the firmament of his heart, that desire gets immediately fulfilled because of the purity of his heart. This way the yogi is superior to the ascetics and the ritualists. The men of knowledge mentioned here are those that seek enlightenment through the scriptures. But the truths revealed in the sacred books are directly shining in the pure heart of the yogi. He need not draw inspiration from books. He is therefore superior even to men of knowledge. In becoming yogi, man achieves everything.

What is the good of mere book learning? The learned may at best be adepts in aptly and accurately quoting from scriptures. One's lifelong repeating them verbatim effects no change in one's life. But what is told in the scriptures has to be applied to life and improvement brought on it. Scriptural knowledge is of no avail to the one attached to earthly life.

A man pressingly caught up in the midst of a marching multitude, is bound to be pushed on to the destination without much effort on his part. Similarly, the yoga propensity stored up in the mind in the previous births, combined with the present favourable and augmenting atmosphere, rapidly carries the yogi on towards the goal.

Two soldiers in the war front were taken prisoners by the enemy and forced to work for him. One of the two got himself reconciled to his captivity and chose to be a careerist under the enemy, while the other earnestly studied the ways and means of his escape, in the midst of his toiling for the enemy. People of the world are like the first prisoner, intent on making the best of the earthly life. The *yoga-jijñāsu* or the enquirer of yoga is superior like the second prisoner in as much as he gives thought to self-emancipation The chanters of the Vedas and those others engaged in the Vedic rites are concerned with enjoyments on earth and in heaven. Being bound to life in the senses, they are inferior. The scope of the ritualistic Vedas also is limited to the senses. The Vedas merely promote and prolong the wheel of birth and death. The enquirer of yoga gets to know of the possibilities of liberating himself from the wheel of birth and death. He is therefore greater than the earth-bound man. He who practises yoga is greater still; for, he is progressing towards perfection and liberation.

In what respect is the yogi, progressing in his *sadhana*,superior to the man given to the Vedic rites? The elucidation comes :—

Meditate on Enlightenment and Bliss which are Eternal. Then you gain Bliss which is everlasting. This Bliss in the ordinary man is shrouded in ignorance. As your desire for sense pleasures declines, your devotion to the Lord develops into divine thirst. — Sri Ramakrishna

The characteristics of *Jivatman*, the individual soul, have so far been expounded in these six chapters. To what extent the *Jivatman* can elevate himself has also been enumerated. There is no purpose superior to the devotion to the Lord, to which the highly evolved soul can apply himself. The following six chapters are devoted to the definition of Iswara and the development of *Bhakti*. This last stanza in this chapter gives the link between the first six chapters and the second six chapters. It is indicated here that the development of one form of yoga into another is as natural and spontaneous as the evolution of a boy into a youth. Karma yoga evolved into Raja yoga, and this again is going to evolve into Bhakti yoga.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ध्यानयोगो नाम
षष्ठोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām*
*yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde dhyānayogo*
*nāma ṣaṣṭho 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the sixth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF MEDITATION

Goal. Whereas the man given to the Vedic rites oscillates and merely speculates about his future prospects here and hereafter.

The new born calf totters and tumbles down several times before learning to frisk about. Similarly, the *sadhaka* has to struggle much before he meets with success — **Sri Ramakrishna**

Yoga being hard to achieve, what is the harm in the ordinary man having recourse to any other ways of accomplishing the desired ends? The sovereignty of yoga is extolled :—

**Yoga is Unparalleled — 46-47**

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६

तपस्-विभ्यः अधिकः योगी ज्ञानिभ्यः अपि मत्-तः अधिकः ।
कर्मिभ्य. च अधिकः योगी तस्मात् योगी भव अर्जुन ॥

*tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogī jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikaḥ ।*
*karmıbhyaś cā 'dhiko yogī tasmād yogī bhavā 'rjuna* ॥

तपस्विभ्यः *tapasvibhyaḥ* than ascetics अधिकः *adhikaḥ* superior योगी *yogī* the yogi ज्ञानिभ्यः *jñānibhyaḥ* than the wise अपि *api* even मतः *mataḥ* thought अधिक. *adhikaḥ* superior कर्मिभ्यः *karmibhyaḥ* than the men of action च *ca* and अधिकः *adhikaḥ* superior योगी *yogī* the yogi तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore योगी *yogī* a yogi भव *bhava* be अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

***The yogi is deemed superior to ascetics, superior to men of knowledge even; he is also superior to ritualists. Therefore be you a yogi, O Arjuna.*** **46**

It is incumbent on man to choose an ideal in life lest he should drift and deviate into an empty existence. The higher the ideal the harder it is to achieve. Still, an attainable great ideal has to be fixed. The highest and best of all ideals is to become

The term *mad āśrayaḥ* connotes complete indifference to the fruits of action, fame, name and such like earthly acquisitions and a staunch attachment to the Lord alone.

*Samagram* signifies the glory, might, energy, overlordship and similar divine attributes of Iswara.

He who perceives the perfect functioning of a government cannot help appreciating it. Similarly one's admiration is carried on to a divine level when one devotes oneself to the study of the cosmic functioning of the Lord.

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २

ज्ञानम् ते अहम् स-वि-ज्ञानम् इदम् वक्-ष्यामि अ-शेष-तः ।
यत् ज्ञा-त्वा न इह भूयः अन्यत् ज्ञा-तव्यम् अव-शिष्यते ॥

*jñānaṁ te 'haṁ savijñānam idaṁ vakṣyāmy aśeṣataḥ* |
*yaj jñātvā ne 'ha bhūyo 'nyaj jñātavyam avaśiṣyate* ||

ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge ते *te* to thee अहम् *ahaṁ* I सविज्ञानम् *savijñānaṁ* combined with realization इदम् *idaṁ* this वक्ष्यामि *vakṣyāmi* will declare अशेषतः *aśeṣataḥ* in full यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known न *na* not इह *iha* here भूयः *bhūyaḥ* more अन्यत् *anyat* anything else ज्ञातव्यम् *jñātavyaṁ* what ought to be known अवशिष्यते *avaśiṣyate* remains

**I shall teach you in full this knowledge combined with realization, which being known, nothing more here remains to be known. 2**

Whatever is comprehended with the aid of the senses, mind and intellect is *jnana* or knowledge.

A worldly man may be as much informed in religion as the spiritual man, or he may even excel in learning and intelligence He may even be endowed with the rigidity of a yogi's life and the detachment of a Sanyasin In the midst of these merits his life may dwindle into nothing if he utilizes them all not for the glory of the Lord but for self-glorification, name, fame and wealth. — Sri Ramakrishna

Who again, among the yogis, is the best one? The declaration comes.—

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ४७

योगिनाम् अपि सर्वेषाम् मद्-गतेन अन्त.-आत्मना ।
श्रद्धा-वान् भजते यः माम् स मे युज्-त-तम मन्-त ॥

*yogınām api sarveṣām madgatenā 'ntarātmanā* ।
*śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ* ॥

योगिनाम् *yogınām* of yogis अपि *apı* even सर्वेषाम् *sarvesām* of all मद्गतेन *madgatena* merged in me अन्तरात्मना *antarātmanā* with inner self श्रद्धावान् *śraddhāvān* endued with faith भजते *bhajate* worships य *yaḥ* who माम् *mām* me स: *saḥ* he मे *me* by me युक्तत्म *yuktatamaḥ* most devout मत: *mataḥ* is deemed

**And of all yogis, he who worships Me with faith, his inmost self merged in Me, — him I hold to be the most devout. 47**

All those who practise meditation, concentration and purification of the mind are good yogis. A purified mind easily gets at whatever it wants to own. That yogi excels who, instead of turning his powerful mind on minor deities and mundane things, devotes himself to the worship of Iswara, the Supreme Goal. There is no higher state than this to be attained by man.

tion, cooking, prosperity, good luck, bliss, beatitude, complete sanctification, final emancipation, the acquisition of supernatural yogic powers—all these and more are indicated by this one word—*siddhi*. It may be noted that people are all striving for the achievement of the one or the other of these features. Among them he who aspires for the attainment of the Divinity, stands supreme according to the Lord.

The higher the ideal, the harder is the achievement of it. Pitfalls are too many in the path to Divine Perfection. Competency for It is rarely found among men. The right attitude, the right understanding, the right adjustment, the right application—these are the fourfold indispensable virtues that lead the aspirant to Divinity. Men who are fully equipped with all these divine qualities are rare indeed.

The devotees who enter the temple of Mother Annapurna in Banaras cannot get out of it without receiving some consecrated food in accordance with the wont. Some get it immediately while the others have to wait long before being blessed with it. But nobody is denied the privilege of obtaining it. Similarly *Mukti* is assured for all. Some get it in this very birth. Others have access to it after two or three births, while yet others have to wait and go through countless births before becoming competent for emancipation. But all are destined for *Mukti* some time or other. — **Sri Ramakrishna**

It is the knowledge of God that makes man fit for *Mukti*. But God-knowledge is rather vague and abstruse for the ordinary man. He has therefore to be put in the path that is discernible to him. Proceeding from the known to the unknown is natural for him. This process is as follows :—

# ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगः

## JNANA VIJNANA YOGA
## THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE AND REALIZATION
## CHAPTER VII

Prakriti Low and High — The Is ness in the Elements and Beings is Iswara — The Excellences in Beings come from God — The Maya of the Three Gunas — Four Types of Virtuous Men — The Votaries of Minor Gods — The Characteristics of Iswara — The Discerning and the Non discerning

**Prakriti-Low and High — 1-7**

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १

मयि आ-सञ्-त-मनाः पार्थ योगम् युञ्जन् मद्-आ-श्रयः ।
अ-सम्-शयम् समग्रम् माम् यथा ज्ञा-स्य-सि तत् श्रृणु ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*mayy āsaktamanāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan madāśrayaḥ* ।
*asamśayam samagram mām yathā jñāsyasi tac chṛṇu* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

मयि *mayi* on me आसक्तमनाः *āsaktamanāḥ* with mind clinging पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha योगम् *yogam* yoga युञ्जन् *yuñjan* practising मदाश्रयः *mad āśrayaḥ* taking refuge in me असंशयम् *asamśayam* without doubt समग्रम् *samagram* wholly माम् *mām* me यथा *yathā* how ज्ञास्यसि *jñāsyasi* shalt know तत् *tat* that श्रृणु *śṛṇu* hearken

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Listen, O Partha, how, with your mind clinging to Me, and taking refuge in Me and practising yoga, you will without any doubt know Me in full. 1**

from the bad, the agreeable from the disagreeable. That which creates the sense of agency is the egoism, without which action is impossible. The individuality of one is based on the peculiarities of these three internal organs.

The eightfold *Prakriti* mentioned here is elaborated into twenty-four categories by the Samkhya system of philosophy.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ ५

अ-परा इयम् इतः तु अन्याम् प्र-कृतिम् विद्-धि मे पराम् ।
जीव-भू-ताम् महा-बाहो यया इदम् धार्-यते जगत् ॥

*apare 'yam itas tv anyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām* ।
*jīvabhūtāṁ mahābāho yaye 'daṁ dhāryate jagat* ॥

अपरा *aparā* lower इयम् *iyaṁ* this इतः *itaḥ* from this तु *tu* but अन्याम् *anyāṁ* different प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtiṁ* nature विद्धि *viddhi* know मे *me* my पराम् *parāṁ* higher जीवभूताम् *jīvabhūtāṁ* the very life-element महाबाहो *mahā-bāho* O mighty-armed यया *yayā* by which इदम् *idaṁ* this धार्यते *dhāryate* is upheld जगत् *jagat* world

**This is My lower prakriti, but different from it, know, O mighty-armed, My higher prakriti—the life element by which this universe is upheld. 5**

All the five elements and the three internal organs put together form the inferior constituent of the Lord. The cosmic life principle or the sum total of the *Jivatman* is His superior constituent. An example elucidates this truth. The smoke that emanates from fire is its lower nature, and the spark its higher nature. The characteristics of the fire are

And *vijnana* is the direct grasp of the reality, come about through self-discipline. The former is mediate and the latter immediate. The one is derived through sight and the other through insight. Tuition is needed for the one and intuition for the other. The former is *paroksha jnanam* and the latter, *aparoksha jnanam*. Endowed with both of these, the aspirant gets to know Brahman or Truth in Its entirety.

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ३

मनुष्याणाम् सहस्रेषु कः-चित् यत्-अति सिध्-तये ।
यत्-अताम् अपि सिध्-तानाम् कः-चित् माम् वेद्-ति तत्त्वतः ॥

*manusyānāṁ sahasreṣu kaścid yatati siddhaye* ।
*yatatām api siddhānāṁ kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ* ॥

मनुष्याणाम् *manusyānāṁ* of men सहस्रेषु *sahasreṣu* among thousands कश्चित् *kaścit* some one यतति *yatati* strives सिद्धये *siddhaye* for perfection यतताम् *yatatām* of the striving ones अपि *api* even सिद्धानां *siddhānāṁ* of the successful ones कश्चित् *kaścit* some one माम् *māṁ* me वेत्ति *vetti* knows तत्त्वतः *tattvataḥ* in essence

**Among thousands of men scarcely one strives for perfection, and of those who strive and succeed, scarcely one knows Me in truth.** 3

The original word for perfection is *siddhi*, which is a comprehensive term connoting quite a number of meanings all pregnant with great ideas. Fulfilment, accomplishment, complete attainment, success, the hitting of a mark, healing of a disease, coming into force, validity, payment, indisputable conclusion, solution of a problem, maturity, prepara-

**Know that these two are the womb of all beings. I am the origin and dissolution of the whole universe.**

Life has its origin in the conjugation of the sentient and the insentient. The body bereft of life becomes a corpse; life without the instrument of the body becomes ineffective. The act of living ensues from the union of the sentient and the insentient, the *kshetrajna* and the *kshetra*. The commingling of these two *Prakritis*—the conscious principle and the unconscious matter—is evident all over the universe. The cloud has its origin and sustenance in the Akasa, and ultimately it dissolves itself in the Akasa. Likewise, Iswara is the source, support and destiny of His *Prakritis*, high and low.

During those days when I was subjecting myself to spiritual discipline, I wished to know what *Maya*, the deluding power, was like. I saw a drop of water slowly evolving into a girl who further grew into a maid. She begot a baby and strangely enough swallowed it too. This act of hers was repeated several times. I concluded from that vision that it was *Maya*.

—Sri Ramakrishna

This being the truth about Iswara :—

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ ७

मद्-तः पर-तरम् न अन्यत् किम्-चित् अस्-ति धनम्-जय ।
मयि सर्वम् इदम् प्रोतम् सूत्रे मणि-गणाः इव ॥

*mattaḥ parataraṁ nā 'nyat kiṁcid asti dhanaṁjaya* ।
*mayi sarvaṁ idaṁ protaṁ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva* ॥

मत्तः *mattaḥ* than me परतरम् *parataraṁ* higher न *na* not अन्यत् *anyat* other किंचित् *kiṁcit* anyone अस्ति *asti* is धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* O Dhananjaya मयि *mayi* in me

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ४

भूमि आप अनलः वायु खम् मनः बुध्-ति एव च ।
अहम्-कार इति इयम् मे भिद्-ना प्रकृतिः अष्टधा ॥

*bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuh kham mano buddhir eva ca |*
*ahamkāra iti 'yam me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā ||*

भूमि *bhūmiḥ* earth आप *āpah* water अनल *analaḥ* fire वायु *vāyuḥ* air खम् *kham* ether मन *manaḥ* mind बुद्धि *buddhiḥ* intellect एव *eva* even च *ca* and अहंकार *ahamkāraḥ* egoism इति *iti* thus इयम् *iyam* this मे *me* my भिन्ना *bhinnā* divided प्रकृति. *prakṛtiḥ* nature अष्टधा *aṣṭadhā* eightfold

**Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism; thus is My prakriti divided eightfold. 4**

An element is defined in one way by the modern science and in quite another way by the Indian systems of philosophy According to the latter the five senses of perception are the means to take cognizance of the elements The ear perceives sound which is characteristic of ether or Akasa The skin all over the body is endowed with the sense of touch which is peculiar to air The eye cognizes form revealed by light or fire The tongue experiences taste of things dissolved in water, but for the aid and agency of water nothing can be tasted The nose contacts smell produced by earth These five instruments of knowledge are thus recognized as the revealers of the five elements, of which the world is constituted.

The faculty of feeling is designated as the mind The intellect is that which distinguishes the good

रसः अहम् अप्-सु कौन्तेय प्रभा अस्-मि शशि-सूर्ययोः ।
प्रणवः सर्व-वेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषम् नृषु ॥

*raso 'ham apsu kaunteya prabhā 'smi śaśisūryayoḥ* ।
*praṇavaḥ sarvavedeṣu śabdaḥ khe pauruṣaṁ nṛṣu* ॥

रसः *rasaḥ* sapidity अहम् *ahaṁ* I अप्सु *apsu* in water कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya (son of Kunti) प्रभा *prabhā* light अस्मि *asmi* am I शशिसूर्ययोः *śaśisūryayoḥ* in the moon and the sun प्रणवः *praṇavaḥ* the syllable OM सर्ववेदेषु *sarva vedeṣu* in all the Vedas शब्दः *śabdaḥ* sound खे *khe* in ether पौरुषम् *pauruṣaṁ* virility नृषु *nṛṣu* in men

**I am the sapidity in water, O son of Kunti; I, the radiance in moon and sun; I am the syllable Om in all the Vedas; sound in ether and manliness in man. 8**

The sweetness in eatables indicates the presence of sugar in them. Similarly, the innate nature of Iswara reveals itself in all the modifications He has undergone. It is imperative for the aspirant that he recognizes the presence of Iswara in the varieties of His manifestations. *Jnana* of this kind is conducive to *vijnana*. Pure water is tasteless, but the power in it to reveal the tastes of things is really the power of Iswara. But for the indeterminate sapidity in water the determinate difference in taste between a stone and a candy cannot be made out by the tongue. Fire is another element represented by the sun and the moon the light of which when perceived by the eyes bring the knowledge of the colour, form and beauty in them. Ether similarly functions as the vehicle of sound, the modifications of which are the various languages and the synthesis of which is the

in the sparks, while its action in the smoke. Technically put, the smoke is the *taṭastha lakshanam*—accidental definition of the fire and the spark, the *svarūpa lakshanam*—innate definition. Knowing of the spark is equivalent to knowing of the fire. Pure Consciousness which is the Paramatman is inherent in the *Jivatman* also. The spark is that which has separated itself from the fire. But the *Jivatman* is not and cannot be dissociated from the Paramatman. As a wave in the ocean, the individual soul is ever in the Cosmic Soul, though with its limiting adjuncts.

The *Jiva-prakriti* or the *kshetrajna* is utilizing the *Jada-prakriti* or the *kshetra* as its body and upholding it too. This act of the conscious principle is like the Akasa containing in itself all the other four elements.

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ६

एतद्-योनीनि भू-तानि सर्वाणि इति उप-धारय ।
अहम् कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्र-भव· प्र-लयः तथा ॥

*etad yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇī 'ty upadhāraya* ।
*ahaṁ kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā* ॥

एतद्योनीनि *etad yonīni* those of which these two (Prakritis) are the womb भूतानि *bhūtānī* beings सर्वाणि *sarvāni* all इति *iti* thus उपधारय *upadhāraya* know अहम् *ahaṁ* I कृत्स्नस्य *kṛtsnasya* of the whole जगतः *jagataḥ* of the world प्रभवः *prabhavah* source प्रलयः *pralayaḥ* dissolution तथा *tathā* also

The brilliance in fire and sun is one and the same. While the former is handy and always available to man the latter is to be beheld with reverence from where he is. But both of them are the physical representations of the undecaying splendour of Brahman. Meditation on sun and fire leads to the cognizance of the divine blaze within oneself.

Self-consciousness is concomitant with the manifestation of life and it persists, though in varying degrees in all beings. Meditation on the continuity of life is therefore equivalent to meditation on consciousness. There should be no difficulty for the *sadhaka* in having recourse to either form of meditation.

It is one thing just to live and quite another to make a conscious attempt at intensifying the life that one lives. Ascetics are they who intensify life by subjective means. The process of their effecting this end is known as *tapas*—austerity. The presence of the Lord is patent in this holy act. The *sadhaka* ought to study the austerity of the successful ascetics so that he may follow in their wake. The Lord Siva is designated as *Ghora tapasvin* — the One of terrible austerity.

**The Excellences in Beings come from God — 10-12**

वीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १०

वीजम् माम् सर्व-भूतानाम् विद्-हि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्-धिः बुद्धिमताम् अस्-मि तेजः तेजस्-विनाम् अहम् ॥

सर्वम् *sarvam* all इदम् *idam* this प्रोतम् *protaṁ* is strung सूत्रे *sūtre* on a string मणिगणाः *maṇigaṇāḥ* clusters of gems इव *iva* like

**There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Dhananjaya. All this is strung on Me, as rows of gems on a string. 7**

The producer, the sustainer and the withdrawer of the universe is Iswara. There is no power, extraneous to Him, to interfere with His work, great or small. The gems strung together may vary in colour and species. But the supporting string is the same all through. The universes sustained by the Lord, may, in that fashion, vary in their appearances; but the Sustainer of all of them is the same. *Sūtra* is the Samskrit word for string. The Lord is therefore called the *Sūtrātman*—the string-like supporter of the manifested worlds. The Pure Consciousness, which is the Substratum of all beings sentient and insentient, is the same.

What Brahman is like cannot be grasped by the ordinary mind. He therefore became *Arddhanariswara*—half-man, half-woman—in order to make Himself knowable to beings. This form of His indicates that *Purusha* and *Prakriti* are but two different readings of the same Reality He has further materialized Himself into the sentient and the insentient. Therefore nothing is alien to Him —Sri Ramakrishna

Is it ever possible for us to behold Him as having become all these manifestations? The clue is given:-

**The Is ness in the Elements and Beings is Iswara—8-9**

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥ ८

body, particularly the face. Being endowed with this splendour is no accident, fluke or oddity of nature. It is the outcome of the divine life that one lives. The spiritual splendour is itself the presence of the Lord evoking adoration.

बलं बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११

बलम् बल-वताम् अस्-मि काम-राग-वि-वर्जितम् ।
धर्म-अ-वि-रुध्-तः भूतेषु कामः अस्-मि भरत-ऋषभ ॥

*balaṁ balavatām asmi kāma rāga vivarjitam* ।
*dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo 'smi bharata ṛṣabha* ॥

बलम् *balaṁ* strength बलवताम् *balavatāṁ* of the strong अस्मि *asmi* am (I) कामरागविवर्जितम् *kāma rāga vivarjitaṁ* devoid of desire and attachment धर्माविरुद्धः *dharmāviruddhaḥ* unopposed to dharma भूतेषु *bhūteṣu* in beings कामः *kāmaḥ* desire अस्मि *asmi* am (I) भरत ऋषभ *bharata ṛṣabha* O lord of the Bharatas

**I am the strength of the strong devoid of desire and passion. In beings I am desire, not contrary to dharma, O chief of the Bharatas. 11**

*Kāma* or desire is the hankering of the mind for objects that are invisible and not yet obtained, while *rāga* or passion is the clinging and craving for the visible and obtained objects. That strength is abused which is directed towards the fulfilment of desire and passion. On the other hand, the strength utilized on noble and holy causes, gets sanctified. The doings of Ravana and Rama are examples of the abuse and proper use of strength.

syllable Om. The truths and the facts in Nature conveyed through languages are the Vedas. This way, Iswara reveals Himself as the five elements each of which has a distinctive feature in the revelation of *jnana*.

It is not sufficient for man simply to assume the human form and carry on the human existence. He is verily man who exhibits human excellence in all of his doings. Man fulfils himself this way and this fulfilment is for the glory of the Lord. He adores God best who fulfils himself perfectly.

**पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।**
**जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥ ९**

पुण्यः गन्धः पृथिव्याम् च तेजः च अस्-मि विभावसौ ।
जीवनम् सर्व-भूतेषु तप. च अस्-मि तपस्-विषु ॥

*puṇyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyāṁ ca tejaś cā 'smi vibhāvasau* ।
*jīvanaṁ sarva bhūteṣu tapaś cā 'smi tapasviṣu* ॥

पुण्य. *puṇyaḥ* sweet गन्धः *gandhaḥ* fragrance पृथिव्याम् *pṛthivyām* in earth च *ca* and तेजः *tejaḥ* brilliance च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* am (I) विभावसौ *vibhāvasau* in fire जीवनम् *jīvanaṁ* life सर्वभूतेषु *sarva bhūteṣu* in all beings तपः *tapaḥ* austerity च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* am (I) तपस्विषु *tapasviṣu* in ascetics

**I am the sweet fragrance in earth and the brilliance in fire; I am the life in all beings and the austerity in ascetics. 9**

Odour in all of its forms is characteristic of the element earth. But the sweet fragrance is specified here because of aroma being associated with the ritualistic worship of the Lord.

and sustenance in Iswara. But it is not like the curd coming from milk. Just as a piece of rope appears as a snake in twilight, the Lord puts on the appearance of Nature through His inscrutable *Māyā*. The rope, the original stuff, does not depend for its being on snake the assumed reality; but the seeming snake depends for its existence on the rope, the reality. To put it in another way, the unreal snake is a superimposition on the real rope. Similarly, the world of the three Gunas is a superimposition on Iswara. This power of appearing as the *Prakriti* is inherent in Him. This is the meaning of 'I am not in them, they are in Me'.

The goal of human life is to transcend the perception of the universe and to get fixed in the vision of Iswara. (In chapter two, stanza forty-five and in chapter nine stanzas four and five this point is variously dealt with.)

A holy man used to smile seeing the colours produced by the chandelier in a lamp. He smiled because the seeming universe is as untrue as these colours.

— Sri Ramakrishna

**The Maya of the Three Gunas — 13-15**

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ १३

त्रिभिः गुण-मयैः भावैः एभिः सर्वम् इदम् जगत् ।
मोहितम् न अभि-जा-ना-ति माम् एभ्यः परम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*tribhir guṇamayair bhāvair ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat* |
*mohitaṁ nā 'bhijānāti māṁ ebhyaḥ param avyayam* ||

त्रिभिः *tribhiḥ* by three गुणमयैः *guṇamayaiḥ* composed of Gunas भावैः *bhāvaiḥ* by natures एभिः *ebhiḥ* by

*bijam mām sarvabhūtānām viddhi pārtha sanātanam |*
*buddhir buddhimatām asmi tejas tejasvinām aham ||*

बीजम् *bijam* seed माम् *mām* me सर्वभूतानाम् *sarva bhūtānām* of all beings विद्धि *viddhi* know पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सनातनम् *sanātanam* eternal बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intelligence बुद्धिमताम् *buddhimatām* of the intelligent अस्मि *asmi* am (I) तेजः *tejaḥ* splendour तेजस्विनाम् *tejasvinām* of the splendid अहम् *aham* I

**Know Me, O Partha, as the eternal seed of all beings; I am the intelligence of the intelligent; the splendour of the splendid.** **10**

The constant source is otherwise known as the eternal seed The ocean is the eternal seed of the clouds that appear and disappear. The Lord is this wise the source of all beings He being eternal, the varieties of beings coming into existence is inevitable and endless Having a reverential attitude to all of them amounts to the adoration of their Source, the Lord.

Beings are classified as the high and the low in accordance with the intelligence evident in them. Clarification of the intelligence is one of the noble purposes of life As it gets clarified the cognizance of the Atman becomes clear He who fully understands Brahman becomes himself Brahman In whomsoever there is intelligence, it has to be adored, even as the Lord is adored

*Tejas* and *Ojas* are both splendours born of the ethical and spiritual excellence While the latter is internal and invisible, the former is patent on the

दैवी हि एषा गुण-मयी मम माया दुर्-अति-अया ।
माम् एव ये प्र-पद्-य-अन्ते मायाम् एताम् तरन्ति ते ॥

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā* ।
*mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etām taranti te* ॥

दैवी *daivī* divine हि *hi* verily एषा *eṣā* this गुणमयी *guṇamayī* made of Gunas मम *mama* my माया *māyā* illusion दुरत्यया *duratyayā* difficult to cross over माम् *mām* in me एव *eva* only ये *ye* who प्रपद्यन्ते *prapadyante* take refuge मायाम् *māyām* illusion एताम् *etām* this तरन्ति *taranti* cross over ते *te* they

**Verily this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the Gunas, is hard to surmount; but those who take refuge in Me alone, they cross over this illusion. 14**

*Daivī māyā*, the divine illusion, is the cloak that the Lord has assumed. It serves as His body. महामायः *Mahā-māyaḥ* is one of the appellations of Vishnu. He who is an expert in creating the illusion, is the meaning of this term. He has hidden His Reality in the garb of Nature. All the same, He deigns to disclose Himself to those who take refuge in Him. The Reality in Him being known, the assumed garb of *Māyā* vanishes. It is like the disappearance of the phantom of the snake when the rope is perceived in its reality.

Why are we not able to behold the Divine Mother? It is because She keeps Herself concealed behind the chicks or bamboo screen after the fashion of the respectable ladies of an aristocratic family. She sees everything and guides everything, but none can see Her. But the true devotees who are Her kith and kin can cross the chicks, get near and behold Her.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Desire as such is not a vice. The desire to eat is a sanctioned one, when it is prompted by hunger. The desire for self-emulation is a virtue; the desire to excel another in good conduct is laudable. The keen desire to obtain the grace of the Lord is a divine gift and a prelude to God-vision.

Why does the mind deviate when one sits in meditation? It is due to base desires. A fly sits now on sacramental food and next on filth. But the case of the bee is different. It sits on a blossom or in its hive and nowhere else. The worldly minded *sadhakas* are like the house fly and the *Paramahamsas* like the bee. The former are occasionally devoted and the latter ever devoted to the Lord.

—Sri Ramakrishna

ये चैव सात्त्विकाभावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ १२

ये च एव सात्त्विका: भावाः राजसाः तामसाः च ये ।
मद्-तः एव इति तान् विद्-हि न तु अहम् तेषु ते मयि ॥

*ye cai 'va sāttvikā bhāvā rājasās tāmasāś ca ye |*
*matta eve 'ti tān viddhi na tv ahaṁ teṣu te mayi ||*

ये *ye* whatever च *ca* and एव *eva* even सात्त्विकाः *sāttvikāḥ* pure भावाः *bhāvāḥ* natures राजसाः *rājasāḥ* active तामसाः *tāmasāḥ* inert च *ca* and ये *ye* whatever मत्तः *mattaḥ* from me एव *eva* verily इति *iti* thus तान् *tān* them विद्धि *viddhi* know न *na* not तु *tu* but अहम् *aham* I तेषु *teṣu* in them ते *te* they मयि *mayi* in me

**And whatever beings are of Sattva, of Rajas or of Tamas, know them to proceed from Me; still I am not in them, they are in Me. 12**

*Prakriti* or Nature constituted of the three categories—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*—has its origin

ing gets completely distorted. That it is Iswara who manifests Himself as the universe, is something beyond their ken. They detest everything pertaining to the Divine. The deluded have therefore no alternative to self-destruction.

The way of the sieve is to let the fine things pass through and hold the coarse things to itself. Likewise, the way of the wicked is to let the merits go and hold the evils fast.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Who are they that get drawn to the Lord? They are delineated :—

**Four Types of Virtuous Men — 16-19**

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६

चतुर्-विधाः भजन्ते माम् जनाः सु-कृतिनः अर्जुन ।
आर्तः जि-ज्ञासुः अर्थ-अर्थी ज्ञानी च भरत-ऋषभ ॥

*caturvidhā bhajante māṁ janāḥ sukṛtino 'rjuna* ।
*ārto jijñāsur arthārthī jñānī ca bharata ṛṣabha* ॥

चतुर्विधाः *caturvidhāḥ* four kinds भजन्ते *bhajante* worship माम् *māṁ* me जनाः *janāḥ* people सुकृतिनः *sukṛtinaḥ* virtuous अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna आर्तः *ārtaḥ* the distressed जिज्ञासुः *jijñāsuḥ* the seeker of knowledge अर्थार्थी *arthārthī* the seeker of wealth ज्ञानी *jñānī* the wise च *ca* and भरत ऋषभ *bharata ṛṣabha* O lord of the Bharatas

**Four types of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna: the man in distress, the man seeking knowledge, the man seeking wealth and the man imbued with wisdom, O the best of the Bharatas.** *16*

these सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इदम् *idaṁ* this जगत् *jagat* world मोहितम् *mohitaṁ* deluded न *na* not अभिजानाति *abhijānāti* knows माम् *mām* me एभ्यः *ebhyah* from them परम् *paraṁ* higher अव्ययम् *avyayam* immutable

**Deluded by these threefold dispositions of Prakriti — the Gunas, this world does not know Me, who am above them and immutable.** **13**

Brahman is here designated as *Param* which means the One beyond the ken of the intellect and the senses. This Reality undergoes no modification and so It is immutable.

Those who see a cinema take no note of the screen on which it is projected. The phenomenal universe is made up of the three Gunas; likes and dislikes in all forms are also born of the three Gunas. People entangled in these three categories are immersed in their experiences of the phenomenal existence and they take no note of the Basis which is unaffected by all these modifications. The *Chitakasa* or Brahman the Pure Consciousness remains as the Substratum of the perceived universe. They who are bound by the Gunas are unable to cognize It.

Iswara plays at assuming the human forms He is a great magician The universe and the beings in it are all His magic, created by *His inscrutable power called Maya.* The magician is real while his magic is a mere phantom.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How shall one extricate oneself from this delusion ? The way is shown :—

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ १४

Reality while the universe and the beings are all mere superimposition on It. Adoring the Reality to the exclusion of the appearance is but natural to him.

Among the people who believe in God, these are the four types who seek to contact Him, each according to his understanding and attainments. All the four groups are virtuous because of their right understanding and right doings.

Blessed are they who keep God as their goal and strive accordingly. Zeros have no value, but they gain in value when linked to the number one. God is the number one and all the worldly things are zeros. Independent of God, they are mere ciphers, but when associated with Him, they gain in importance.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

But who stands supreme among these virtuous four? The answer comes :—

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७

तेषाम् ज्ञानी नित्य-युज्-तः एक-भज्-तिः वि-शिष्-य-ते ।
प्रियः हि ज्ञानिनः अति-अर्थम् अहम् सः च मम प्रियः ॥

*teṣāṁ jñānī nityayukta ekabhaktir viśiṣyate |*
*priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ ||*

तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* of them ज्ञानी *jñānī* the wise नित्ययुक्तः *nitya yuktaḥ* ever steadfast एकभक्तिः *eka bhaktiḥ* whose devotion is to the One विशिष्यते *viśiṣyate* excels प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear हि *hi* verily ज्ञानिनः *jñāninaḥ* of the wise अत्यर्थम् *atyarthaṁ* exceedingly अहम् *ahaṁ* I सः *saḥ* he च *ca* and मम *mama* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

**Of these, the wise man, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels; for, supremely dear am I to the wise and he is dear to Me.** **17**

Who are they that alienate themselves from Iswara? They are marked out :—

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ १५

न माम् दुस्-कृतिन मूढा. प्र-पद्-य-अन्ते नर-अधमाः ।
मायया अप-हृ त-ज्ञानाः आसुरम् भावम् आ-श्रि-ताः ॥

*na mām duskṛtino mūdhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ* ।
*māyayā 'pahṛtajñānā āsuram bhāvam āsritāh* ॥

न *na* not माम् *mām* to me दुष्कृतिनः *duṣkṛtinaḥ* evil-doers मूढाः *mūdhāḥ* the deluded प्रपद्यन्ते *prapadyante* seek नर अधमाः *nara adhamāḥ* the lowest of men मायया *māyayā* by Maya अपहृतज्ञाना *apahṛtajñānāh* deprived of knowledge आसुरम् *āsuram* belonging to demons भावम् *bhāvam* nature आश्रिता. *āsritāh* having taken to

**The evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men, deprived of discrimination by Maya and following the way of the Asuras, do not seek refuge in Me. 15**

Asuras are they who delight in deceit, falsehood and torture of beings. Their ways are elaborately dealt with in chapter sixteen. They stand against the worship of the Divine. Practice of cruelty is their pastime.

Evil deeds hide the noble traits in man and expose the base ones. The perpetrators of wickedness become progressively deluded. They are not able to discern between the divine and the unholy. They are therefore the lowest of men. The question of pursuing any good path and pulling up in ethical life does not arise in their cases. Their understand-

The devotees are all favourites of the Lord. Among them again, he who practises the devotion of non-separation stands foremost. As the fuel consigned to fire becomes itself fire, the *Jnani* absorbed in Iswara who is a blaze of *jnana*, becomes one with Him.

A master is naturally drawn to a servant who serves him whole-heartedly and to the best of his ability. When their mutual love and fidelity get firm-rooted the master may some day entrust the management of his entire property to the servant. Akin to this act of man, the Lord holds His devotee as His own Self. — Sri Ramakrishna

The *Jnani* is further extolled :—

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥ १९

बहूनाम् जन्मनाम् अन्ते ज्ञान-वान् माम् प्र-पद्-यते ।
वासु-देवः सर्वम् इति सः महा-आत्मा सु-दुर्-लभः ॥

*bahūnāṁ janmanām ante jñānavān māṁ prapadyate* ।
*vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ* ॥

बहूनाम् *bahūnāṁ* of many जन्मनाम् *janmanāṁ* of births अन्ते *ante* in the end ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* the wise माम् *māṁ* to me प्रपद्यते *prapadyate* approaches वासुदेवः *vāsudevaḥ* Vasudeva सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इति *iti* thus सः *saḥ* he महात्मा *mahātmā* the great soul सुदुर्लभः *sudurlabhaḥ* (is) very hard to find

**At the end of many births, the man of wisdom takes refuge in Me, realizing that Vasudeva is all that is. Rare indeed is that great soul. 19**

*Vāsudeva* connotes the *pratyagātman*—that which is immanent in everything sentient and insentient, movable and immovable, good and bad.

Distress comes to beings in one form or another and at some time or the other. Avoidance of it is impossible to the embodied. Just as medicine is resorted to, to cure disease, the way of the devoted is to supplicate the Divine for deliverance from distress. When the modesty of the Queen Draupadi was at stake in the assembly of the Kauravas, she piteously sought the protection of Sri Krishna and His help did come to save her from that situation. The lives of many a devotee bear testimony to the fact that the Lord comes to the rescue of the pious in distress.

The man seeking knowledge is here designated as *jijñāsu*. It is not given to all to become seekers of God-knowledge. The rare few who seek, obtain it unmistakably. The Lord sees to it that the spiritual thirst of the devotee never goes unslaked. A recent seeker of God-knowledge was Swami Vivekananda and Providence made provision for his obtaining it.

The man seeking wealth usually works for it and that is the proper way. One type of devotees work for it, praying to the Lord at the same time for the easy acquisition of wealth. Another type of devotees have no time to toil for wealth; at the same time they are in need of it for their holy undertakings. They ardently appeal to the Lord and He sends them the required resources.

The man imbued with wisdom is here classified as *Jnani*, the one who has realized the truth. He is one who has gained the insight that Brahman is the

कामैः *kāmaiḥ* by desires तैः तैः *taiḥ-taiḥ* by this or that हृतज्ञानाः *hṛtajñānāḥ* those whose wisdom has been rent away प्रपद्यन्ते *prapadyante* approach अन्यदेवताः *anya devatāḥ* other gods तम् तम् *taṁ-taṁ* this or that नियमम् *niyamaṁ* rite आस्थाय *āsthāya* having followed प्रकृत्या *prakṛtyā* by nature नियताः *niyatāḥ* led स्वया *svayā* by one's own

**But those whose discrimination has been led astray by this or that desire go to other gods, following this or that rite, constrained by their own nature.**

When it is *Vāsudeva* who has become all that is, the question of other gods existing independent of Him does not arise. His limited aspects are, out of courtesy, called other gods. The minor officers of a government are necessarily under its sovereign. When the good will of the head of the regime is obtained, those of the petty officers are contained in it. But the courtier must be worthy of the sovereign. To get at the king is difficult; but the benefit that ensues from it is great. To get at the little office-holders is easy; and the returns thereof are correspondingly small. Analogous to this, getting the grace of God is difficult, but all conducive to *jnana*, *bhakti* and *mukti*. People given to worldly desires do not betake to the worship of Iswara. The devil of the low desire in them makes them mistake little ends for great ones. Accordingly they choose to propitiate minor deities with suitable rites. Their attainments and nature are so low as that.

Healing disease, winning litigation, walking on water—trifling psychic powers such as these, appeal most to men of base mental make. But the true devotees give no thought to those vulgar

*Śiṣṭeṣṭaḥ* is one of the appellations attributed to Vishnu. He who is dear to the good, is the meaning of this name. The highly evolved ones among the human get to love the Lord.

It is but natural for beings to love themselves. The *Jnani* cognizes Brahman as the real entity and the very essence in himself. He is therefore supremely attached to the Reality in himself. That Reality gives the *Jnani* his true individuality. This is how the *Jnani* excels.

After God-realization the aspirant himself gets at godly qualities.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The other three are not undervalued ; for —

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानीत्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८

उदारा· सर्वे एव एते ज्ञानी तु आत्मा एव मे मन्-तम् ।
आ-स्था-तः सः हि युज्-त-आत्मा माम् एव अन्-उत्तमाम् गतिम् ॥

*udārāh sarva evai 'te jñānī tv ātmai 'va me matam* ।
*āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā mām evā 'nuttamāṁ gatim* ॥

उदाराः *udārāḥ* noble सर्वे *sarve* all एव *eva* surely एते *ete* these ज्ञानी *jñānī* the wise तु *tu* but आत्मा *ātmā* Self एव *eva* very मे *me* my मतम् *mataṁ* opinion आस्थितः *āsthitaḥ* is established सः *saḥ* he हि *hi* verily युक्तात्मा *yuktātmā* steadfast-minded माम् *māṁ* me एव *eva* verily अनुत्तमाम् *anuttamāṁ* the supreme गतिम् *gatim* goal

**Noble indeed are all these ; but the wise man, I deem, to be My very Self. For, steadfast in mind, he is established in Me alone, as the supreme goal. 18**

stone to the adoration of the Almighty. The Lord therefore provides the ways and means for the ordinary people to evolve stage by stage in their paths of devotion.

Chapter four, stanza eleven and chapter nine, stanza twenty-three may also be looked into for clarification.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान् ॥ २२

सः तया श्रद्धया युज्-तः तस्य आ-राधनम् ईह्-अते ।
लभ्-अते च ततः कामान् मया एव वि-हि-तान् हि तान् ॥

*sa tayā śraddhayā yuktas tasyā 'rādhanam īhate* ।
*labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayai 'va vihitān hi tān* ॥

सः *saḥ* he तया *tayā* with that श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith युक्तः *yuktaḥ* endued तस्य *tasya* of it आराधनम् *ārādhanaṁ* worship ईहते *īhate* engages in लभते *labhate* obtains च *ca* and ततः *tataḥ* from that कामान् *kāmān* desires मया *mayā* by me एव *eva* surely विहितान् *vihitān* ordained हि *hi* verily तान् *tān* those

**Endowed with that faith, he engages in the worship of that form, and from it he obtains his desires, which are being actually ordained by Me. 22**

The river, the well, the lake, the spring—these are the sources from which water can be availed of; but the grand source for all of these is the rain, without which all these come to nought. Similar to this is the grace of the Lord which gives the start, sustenance and support to all beings. All the needs of all the beings come from the same Cosmic Source.

When a *sadhaka* begins to give a practical shape to his learning that it is God who has become everything, he is styled a *Jnani* even in that initial stage But quite a number of *sadhakas* take innumerable births before they gain complete realization and get fixed in the truth that God alone puts on the appearance of the phenomenon The man who has attained this acme of realization is indeed rare in the world He is verily a god among men The third stanza also of this chapter refers to this great soul

The practice of this tenet of Vedanta contributes directly and indirectly to the welfare of the world. By viewing all beings as veritable divinities, the *sadhaka* elevates himself in spiritual stature This is the benefit directly derived The indirect benefit consists in the others being unconsciously divinized. The more one is deified, the more the devil in one is eradicated.

**Beholding diversity is born of delusion, beholding unity is born of enlightenment —Sri Ramakrishna**

What do they do, who are devoid of devotion and wisdom? Their ways are dilated on —

**The Votaries of Minor Gods — 20 23**

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥ २०

कामैं तै तै हृ त ज्ञाना प्र पद्-यन्ते अन्य-देवता ।
तम् तम् नियमम् आ स्था-य प्रकृत्या नि यम् ता स्वया ॥

*kāmais tais-tair hṛtajñānāḥ prapadyante 'nyadevatāḥ |*
*tam tam niyamaṃ āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā ||*

between the fleeting happiness and the lasting happiness. The earthly impermanent attainments and happinesses deified are called the little gods; whereas the permanent spiritual attainments and bliss ever belong to Iswara. The ignorant seek the former while the enlightened seek the latter.

Why is it that all do not seek Iswara? The position is explained:—

The Characteristics of Iswara—24-26

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥ २४

अ-वि-अक्तम् वि-अक्तिम् आ-पद्-तम् मन्-य-अन्ते माम् अ-बुद्धयः ।
परम् भावम् अ-जानन्तः मम अ-वि-अयम् अन्-उत्तमम् ॥

*avyaktaṁ vyaktim āpannaṁ manyante māṁ abuddhayaḥ*
*paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto mamā 'vyayam anuttamam* ||

अव्यक्तम् *avyaktaṁ* the unmanifested व्यक्तिम् *vyaktiṁ* to manifestation आपन्नम् *āpannaṁ* come to मन्यन्ते *manyante* think माम् *māṁ* me अबुद्धयः *abuddhayaḥ* the foolish परम् *paraṁ* the highest भावम् *bhāvaṁ* nature अजानन्तः *ajānantaḥ* not knowing मम *mama* my अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* immutable अनुत्तमम् *anuttamaṁ* most excellent

**Men of poor understanding think of Me, the unmanifest, as having manifestation, not knowing My supreme state—immutable and unsurpassed. 24**

A benevolent and charitably-minded millionaire may be in rags occasionally just for the fun of it. If a beggar misunderstands him as one in rags and passes by without availing himself of the rich man's charity, the poor man becomes poorer for his

things They are solely intent on gaining the gracious vision of the Lord

— Sri Ramakrishna

What does the Lord do with these men of mean mentality and foolish endeavours? He delineates His dispensation —

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ २१

य य याम् याम् तनुम् भक्त श्रद्धया अर्च्-इतुम् इच्छति ।
तस्य तस्य अ चलाम् श्रद्धाम् ताम् एव वि-दधामि अहम् ॥

*yo yo yām-yām tanum bhaktaḥ*
*śraddhayā 'rcitum icchati* ।
*tasya-tasyā calām śraddhām*
*tām eva vidadhāmy aham* ॥

य *yaḥ* who य *yaḥ* who याम् *yām* which याम् *yām* which तनुम् *tanum* form भक्त *bhaktaḥ* devotee श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith अर्चितुम् *arcitum* to worship इच्छति *icchati* desires तस्य तस्य *tasya-tasya* of him अचलाम् *acalām* unflinching श्रद्धा *śraddhām* faith ताम् *tām* that एव *eva* surely विदधामि *vidadhāmi* make अहम् *aham* I

**Whatever form any devotee with faith wishes to worship, I make that faith of his steady. 21**

Children are very particular to have sweetmeats shaped to their likings, such as a cow, a horse or an elephant The confectioner supplies them sweets according to their tastes The way of the Lord is more generous than that His grace descends suited to the attainments of individuals The worship of *the little gods is not altogether erroneous or sinful* as some theologians would have it It is but a stepping

The magician throws a spell on his audience and keeps it in illusion in regard to his performance. But what seems a magic to the onlookers is not so to the kith and kin of the magician. The nature of his play is well known to himself and his own people. The Lord is the magician who has produced the magic of this world. Its nature is well known to Him only and His devotees.

The sun that cannot be hidden by anything seems to be covered by a patch of cloud; but that patch itself cannot be located except with the aid of sun light. The originator of this cloud is none other than the sun. The cloud is the *yoga māyā* concealing the sun. The *Prakriti* made up of the three Gunas is the *yoga māyā* of Iswara. As it has no existence apart from Iswara, it is held to be in yoga with Him; and because of its veiling capacity it is called *māyā*. Iswara the *akhaṇḍa sat cit ānanda* seems to be concealed by His *yoga māyā* while actually He remains unaffected by it. Further He is *sarvajna* — the all-knowing One. Therefore :—

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चाऽर्जुन ।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ २६

वेद्-अ अहम् सम्-अति-इ-तानि वर्त-मानानि च अर्जुन ।
भव्-इष्याणि च भू-तानि माम् तु वेद न कः-चन ॥

*vedā 'haṁ samatītāni vartamānāni cā 'rjuna* ।
*bhaviṣyāṇi ca bhūtāni māṁ tu veda na kaścana* ॥

वेद *veda* know अहम् *ahaṁ* I समतीतानि *samatītāni* the past वर्तमानानि *vartamānāni* the present च *ca* and अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna भविष्याणि *bhaviṣyāṇi* the future

But the men of mediocre understanding take it that help comes to them from the gods they worship

Water seems to be flowing out from the mouths of cows, tigers and lions attached to the drain pipes from the roof of the house But all these waters have actually come from the heavens in the form of rain Similarly the words uttered by the holy ones are very often the inspiration come from Iswara

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What is it that the ignorant seek? The explanation comes –

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ २३

अन्त-वत् तु फलम् तेषाम्  तत् भव-अति अल्प-मेधसाम् ।
देवान् देव-यज या-अन्ति  मद् भक्ता या अन्ति माम् अपि ॥

*antavat tu phalam tesām tad bhavaty alpamedhasām* ।
*devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti mām api* ॥

अन्तवत् *antavat* finite तु *tu* verily फलम् *phalam* the fruit तेषाम् *tesām* of them तत् *tat* that भवति *bhavati* is अल्पमेधसाम् *alpa medhasām* those of small intelligence देवान् *devān* to the gods देवयज *devayajaḥ* the worshippers of the Devas यान्ति *yānti* go to मद्भक्ता *mad bhaktāḥ* my devotees यान्ति *yānti* go to माम् *mām* to me अपि *api* also

**But the fruit that accrues to those men of small intellect is finite. The worshippers of the gods go to the gods; My devotees come to Me.  23**

Endeavours are practically the same in all the mines But there is a difference between the seekers of iron and the seekers of diamond All men seek to enrich life and to add to happiness Men of small intellect are they who are unable to distinguish

इच्छा-द्वेष-सम्-उद्-स्थेन द्वन्द्व-मोहेन भारत ।
सर्व-भूतानि सम्-मोहम् सर्गे या-अन्ति परम्-तप ॥

*icchā dveṣa samutthena dvandva mohena bhārata* ।
*sarva bhūtāni saṁmohaṁ sarge yānti paraṁtapa* ॥

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन *icchā dveṣa samutthena* arisen from desire and aversion द्वन्द्वमोहेन *dvandva mohena* by the delusion of the pairs of opposites भारत *bhārata* O Bharata सर्वभूतानि *sarva bhūtāni* all beings संमोहम् *saṁ mohaṁ* to delusion सर्गे *sarge* at birth यान्ति *yānti* are subject परंतप *paraṁtapa* O Parantapa

**By the delusion of the pairs of opposites arising from desire and aversion, all beings, O Bharata, are subject to illusion at birth, O harasser of foes.** 27

Among the pairs of opposites the foremost and the most lasting is the one pertaining to life and death. Where life is its counterpart, death, should necessarily be. The existence of the one to the exclusion of the other is impossible. From birth onwards a being proceeds towards death. The interval between the two is what is called life, which is as impermanent as a bubble on water. Death may at any moment swoop and swallow up the embodied. Of the inseparable two, life and death, the desire for the former and aversion for the latter manifest themselves from birth onwards. But both of these attitudes are born of delusion.

The pair of opposites pertaining to pleasure and pain comes next. Sense-pleasures are always crowned with pain. From birth onwards beings hug the one and shun the other. But it is an illusion to seek sense-pleasure to the exclusion of pain.

ignorance Such verily is the lot of those ignorant of the glory of Iswara

An Incarnation of God, like Sri Krishna, assumes a human body, just as the bound souls do But he is no more bound in the manifested body than the sky seen through a window is bound within the frame of that window The manifested body of Sri Krishna is mutable, but in reality He is immutable and unsurpassed by the ordinary human beings His supreme state remains unknown to the people of poor understanding They do not therefore seek to worship Him

How then can we account for the ignorance of the ordinary man? The explanation comes —

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥ २५

न अहम् प्रकाश सर्वस्य योग-माया-सम् आ वृत ।
मुह् त, अयम् न अभि-ज्ञा नाति लोक माम् अ-जम् अ-व्ययम् ॥

*nā 'ham prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāyāsamāvṛtaḥ* ।
*mūḍho 'yam nā 'bhijānāti loko mām ajam avyayam* ॥

न *na* not अहम् *aham* I प्रकाश *prakāśaḥ* manifest सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all योगमायासमावृत *yoga māyā samāvṛtaḥ* veiled by yoga Maya मूढ *mūḍhaḥ* deluded अयम् *ayam* this न *na* not अभिजानाति *abhijānāti* knows लोक *lokaḥ* world माम् *mām* me अजम् *ajam* unborn अव्ययम् *avyayam* imperishable

**I am not revealed to all, as I am veiled by yoga Maya. This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn, the Unchanging. 25**

the Lord is possible to him only whose mind is free from taint.

They only who remain unruffled and unaffected by the pairs of opposites such as victory and defeat, gain and loss, praise and censure and life and death, become steadfast in their vows. Worship of the Lord is possible to such dedicated souls.

A rusty piece of iron is not actively susceptible to magnetization; but when cleansed of the rust, it readily responds. Similarly in that mind which has become rusty with attachment and aversion and likes and dislikes, devotion to the Lord does not dawn. Whereas in a pure mind *bhakti* rises readily.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What is the nature of the understanding of those who, while being devoted to the Lord, take a realistic view of life? The explanation ensues :—

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥ २९

जरा-मरण-मोक्षाय माम् आ-श्रि-त्य यत-अन्ति ये ।
ते ब्रह्म तत् विदुः कृत्स्नम् अधि-आत्मम् कर्म च अ-खिलम् ॥

*jarā maraṇa mokṣāya mām āśritya yatanti ye* ।
*te brahma tad viduḥ kṛtsnam adhyātmaṁ karma cā 'khilam* ॥

जरामरणमोक्षाय *jarā maraṇa mokṣāya* for liberation from old age and death माम् *māṁ* me आश्रित्य *āśritya* having taken refuge in यतन्ति *yatanti* strive ये *ye* who ते *te* they ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman तत् *tat* that विदुः *viduḥ* know कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnaṁ* the whole अध्यात्मम् *adhyātmaṁ* knowledge of the Self कर्म *karma* action च *ca* and अखिलम् *akhilaṁ* whole

च *ca* and भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings माम् *mām* me तु *tu* verily वेद *veda* knows न *na* not कश्चन *kaścana* any one

**I know, O Arjuna, the beings of the past, the present and the future, but no one knows Me. 26**

Iswara is the Lord of *māyā*, having complete control over it The appearance, stay and dissolution of the beings are all acts of *māyā*. Time also exists in *māyā* The Lord being all-knowing, the destiny of all of these is within His ken The beings that were in the past, that are in the present and that are to be in the future are all known to Him But the individual souls do not know anything worth while about themselves, how then are they going to know about Iswara, the Cosmic Soul ! The devotees, however, do not come within this limitation They constantly adore the Lord and choose to be in His proximity. So they understand Him to some extent The others neither adore nor understand Him

It is possible for the swan to separate milk from water and partake of the former only The other birds are unable to do this Iswara is mingled with *maya*, He is non dual with it The ordinary people cannot distinguish Him from *maya* But the *Paramahamsas* — the men of perfection — are able to cognize Iswara to the exclusion of *maya*

— Sri Ramakrishna

Why are people devoid of knowledge and devotion? Their case is analysed —

**The Discerning and the Non discerning — 27-30**

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परंतप ॥ २७

*sādhibhūtādhidaivaṁ māṁ sādhiyajñaṁ ca ye viduḥ* ।
*prayāṇakāle 'pi ca māṁ te vidur yuktacetasaḥ* ॥

साधिभूत अधिदैवम् *sādhibhūta adhidaivaṁ* with the Adhibhuta with the Adhidaiva together माम् *māṁ* me साधियज्ञम् *sādhiyajñaṁ* with the Adhiyajna together च *ca* and ये *ye* who विदुः *viduḥ* know प्रयाणकाले *prayāṇa kāle* at the time of death अपि *api* even च *ca* and माम् *māṁ* me ते *te* they विदुः *viduḥ* know युक्तचेतसः *yukta cetasaḥ* steadfast in mind

**Those who realize Me in the Adhibhuta, in the Adhidaiva and in the Adhiyajna, they of steadfast mind realize Me even in the hour of death. 30**

The details of the *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhiyajña* come in the next chapter. The way of the world is to be scared, confused and frightened in the hour of death. But the yogi accepts death calmly and as a matter of course. It has its due place in Nature. A true study of Nature develops into devotion to the Lord. A yogi's knowledge and devotion reveal themselves best in the hour of death. His God-realization is at its zenith when he drops the body in death.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde jñānavijñāna yogo nāma saptamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the seventh discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE AND REALIZATION

Among the pairs of opposites, the desire for the one and aversion for the other are the foes of the seekers of knowledge and devotion. These foes have to be conquered.

What do they do, who have got over the pairs of opposites? Their path to perfection is portrayed :-

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥ २८

येषाम् तु अन्त-गतम् पापम् जनानाम् पुण्य-कर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्व-मोह-निर्-मुक्ताः भज्-अन्ते माम् दृढ-व्रता ॥

*yeṣām tv antagatam pāpam janānām punyakarmanām* |
*te dvandvamohanirmuktā bhajante mām dṛdhavratāḥ* ||

येषाम् *yeṣām* of whom तु *tu* but अन्तगतम् *antagatam* is at an end पापम् *pāpam* sin जनानाम् *janānām* of men पुण्यकर्मणाम् *punya karmanām* of men of virtuous deeds ते *te* they द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ताः *dvandva moha nir muktāḥ* freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites भजन्ते *bhajante* worship माम् *mām* me दृढव्रता *drdha vratāḥ* men steadfast in vows

**But those men of virtuous deeds whose sins have come to an end, who are freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites worship Me remaining steadfast in their vows. 28**

Whatever action fosters the *Jivahood* in one, is condemned as sin by the wise. In contrast with it, whatever action contributes to self-abnegation is deemed as virtue. Selfless service has to be carried on incessantly lest the mind should lapse into lethargy and egotism. Purity of the mind ensues from constant self-denial. Unswerving adoration of

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।
प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २

अधि-यज्ञः कथम् कः अत्र देहे अस्मिन् मधु-सूदन ।
प्र-या-न-काले च कथम् ज्ञेयः असि नि-यम्-त-आत्मभिः ॥

*adhiyajñaḥ kathaṁ ko 'tra dehe 'smin madhusūdana* ।
*prayāṇakāle ca kathaṁ jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ* ॥

अधियज्ञः *adhiyajñaḥ* Adhiyajna कथम् *kathaṁ* how कः *kaḥ* who अत्र *atra* here देहे *dehe* in body अस्मिन् *asmin* this मधुसूदन *madhusūdana* O Madhusudana प्रयाणकाले *prayāṇakāle* at the time of death च *ca* and कथम् *kathaṁ* how ज्ञेयः *jñeyaḥ* knowable असि *asi* art नियतात्मभिः *niyatātmabhiḥ* by the self-controlled

**Who and how is Adhiyajna here in this body, O Madhusudana? And how, at the time of death, art Thou to be known by the self-controlled? 2**

The concluding two stanzas of the previous discourse induce Arjuna to raise these seven questions which are sequel to the topics discussed. The Lord answers all of them :—

श्री भगवानुवाच

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३

अ-क्षरम् ब्रह्म परमम् स्व-भावः अधि-आत्मम् (ब्रू) उच् य-ते ।
भू-त-भाव-उद्-भव-करः वि-सर्गः कर्म-संज्ञितः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*akṣaraṁ brahma paramaṁ svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate* ।
*bhūtabhāvodbhavakaro visargaḥ karmasaṁjñitaḥ* ॥

**Those who take refuge in Me and strive for deliverance from decay and death, they realize in full that Brahman, the individual self and all karma.** **29**

The mind of man may take its own time to be delivered from the delusion of the pairs of opposites. But there are two other factors in life which are ever staring at man. Decay and death are the two factors unwanted by him; but he can never escape from their clutches To lose one's hard-earned vigour and to become a prey to death—are these the end of human life? To do deeds of rarity, to achieve the impossible and then to quit the world as if in banishment—is this the reward of life on earth? Death drives man to the necessity of raising questions of this type. Death does not allow him to be dormant. It gives him rude knocks and wakes him up to realities with which he is not acquainted. When the right enquiries are thereby made, the *sadhaka* comes to know of the truths about Brahman, about himself and about karma.

When a man wants to eat a fruit, he discards its shell and seeds and helps himself to the pulp. But when he wants to purchase that fruit or make a study of it, he has to take into account the shell, the seeds, the pulp and all the contents of the fruit Very much like this, the seeker of God negates the world and goes to Him. But after God-realization he concludes that it is Brahman that puts on the appearance of the universe and the beings in it. — Sri Ramakrishna

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ ३०

स-अधि-भूत-अधि-दैवम् माम्  स-अधि-यज्ञम् च ये विदुः ।
प्रयाण-काले अपि च माम्  ते विद्-उस् युज्-त-चेतसः ॥

The vibration or the act of becoming that is taking place in the universe is karma. But here this word is used in a particular sense. The action that is the immediate cause of man having come into existence and of his making progress in life, is here technically called karma. Whatever work promotes the welfare of man is karma. The *Pūrvamīmāmsa*, one of the six systems of Hindu philosophy claims that Karma is the only all-powerful agency for man's origin, growth and prosperity.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ ४

अधि-भूतम् क्षरः भावः पुरुषः च अधि-दैवतम् ।
अधि-यज्ञः अहम् एव अत्र देहे देह-भृताम् वर ॥

*adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ puruṣaś cā 'dhidaivatam* ।
*adhiyajño 'ham evā 'tra dehe dehabhṛtāṁ vara* ॥

अधिभूतम् *adhibhūtaṁ* Adhibhuta क्षरः *kṣaraḥ* perishable भावः *bhāvaḥ* nature पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* the soul च *ca* and अधिदैवतम् *adhidaivataṁ* Adhidaiva अधियज्ञः *adhiyajñaḥ* Adhiyajna अहम् *ahaṁ* I एव *eva* alone अत्र *atra* here देहे *dehe* in the body देहभृताम् *dehabhṛtāṁ* of the embodied वर *vara* O best

**Adhibhuta pertains to the perishable Nature and Purusha is the Adhidaivata; I alone am the Adhiyajna here in this body, O best of the embodied. 4**

The five elements — ether, air, fire, water and earth — are designated as *adhibhūta*. In contrast with Brahman which is *aksharam* the elements are *ksharam* or perishable. The physical structure of the Reality is made up of the elements. Though

# अक्षरब्रह्मयोगः

## AKSHARA BRAHMA YOGA
## THE YOGA OF THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN
## CHAPTER VIII

The Worship of Iswara — How the Yogi Relinquishes the Body — The State of Non return — Brahma, the Creator's Standard of Time — Immortality — The Paths of Light and Darkness — Be Ever a Yogi

### The Worship of Iswara — 1-8

अर्जुन उवाच

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १

किम् तत् ब्रह्म किम् अधि आत्मम् किम् कर्म पुरुष-उत्तम ।
अधि भूतम् च किम् प्र-उक्तम् अधि-दैवम् किम् उच्-य-ते ॥

*arjuna uvāca*
*kim tad brahma kim adhyātmam*
*kim karma purusottama* ।
*adhibhūtam ca kiṁ proktam*
*adhidaivam kim ucyate* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said.
किम् *kim* what तत् *tat* that ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman किम् *kim* what अध्यात्मम् *adhyātmaṁ* Adhyatma किम् *kim* what कर्म *karma* action पुरुषोत्तम *purusottama* O best among men अधिभूतम् *adhibhūtam* Adhibhuta च *ca* and किम् *kim* what प्रोक्तम् *proktam* declared अधिदैवम् *adhi daivam* Adhidaiva किम् *kim* what उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**Arjuna said ·**

**What is that Brahman? What is Adhyatma? What is karma? O Best among men! What is said to be Adhibhuta, and what is called Adhidaiva? 1**

selves in the sacrificial fire of Iswara. This is the sublimest act that a human being can ever do.

He is truly a holy man whose body and mind are entirely dedicated to the Lord. He has no occupation other than being absorbed all the while in God. Knowing that the Lord is residing in the hearts of all, he devotedly serves them to the best of his ability. And these are the sure indications of a true man of God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ५

अन्त-काले च माम् एव स्मरन् मुक्-त्वा कलेवरम् ।
यः प्र-याति सः मद्-भावम् याति न अस्-ति अत्र सं-शयः ॥

*antakāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram* ।
*yaḥ prayāti sa madbhāvaṁ yāti nā 'sty atra saṁśayaḥ* ॥

अन्तकाले *antakāle* at the time of death च *ca* and माम् *māṁ* me एव *eva* only स्मरन् *smaran* remembering मुक्त्वा *muktvā* leaving कलेवरम् *kalevaraṁ* body यः *yaḥ* who प्रयाति *prayāti* goes forth सः *saḥ* he मद्भावम् *madbhāvaṁ* my being याति *yāti* attains न अस्ति *na asti* is not अत्र *atra* here संशयः *saṁśayaḥ* doubt

**And whoever, at the time of death, leaving the body, goes forth remembering Me alone, he attains My being; there is no doubt about this. 5**

'My being', mentioned here comprises Iswara in His supreme state.

The essence of the sum total of the entire thoughts and feelings that have been taking place in the mind of man during the span of his life, stands condensed into a single state of mind at the time of his departure from the body. To effect the

श्रीभगवानुवाच *Sri bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavān said

अक्षरम् *aksaram* imperishable ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahma परमम् *paramam* Supreme स्वभाव: *svabhāvaḥ* nature अध्यात्मम् *adhyātmam* self-knowledge उच्यते *ucyate* is called भूतभाव उद्भवकर: *bhūtabhāva udbhavakaraḥ* that which causes the origin of beings विसर्ग: *visargaḥ* offering कर्मसंज्ञित: *karmasamjñitaḥ* is called action

**The Blessed Lord said**

**The Imperishable is Brahman, the Supreme. Its dwelling in the individual body is called Adhyatma. The offering which causes the origin of beings is called karma. 3**

The Absolute Reality is Brahman It is supremely above time, space and causation which are the characteristics of the universe The senses and the intellect cannot gain access to It For this reason It is called *paramam*—the Supreme As the screen is the background for the moving pictures in a cinematograph, Brahman is the substratum, basis and background of the panorama of the universe The changes that take place in the universe do not affect Brahman It is ever Itself, the Being behind the Becoming of the universe It is therefore called *aksharam* — the Imperishable.

The intrinsic merit or property of a thing is called its *svabhāva* The *svabhāva* of the sun is to put forth beams of light Similarly, the *svabhāva* of Brahman is to appear as the multitudinous conscious beings called the *Jivatman* This assumption of the role of the *Jivatman* is called *Adhyātma*.

is the indicator of the trend of the mind of an individual; it cannot be recast or pre-arranged according to one's will and pleasure. Just as the dreamer is, while in a dream, the creature of his own mental make up, so does the dying man assume at the time of death, a mental make up based on his bent in the course of that career. The gross manifestation, at a suitable time and environment, of that mental structure is what is called the next birth. Man is therefore always the architect of his destiny.

What then is it that man ought to do for his welfare both here and in the hereafter? The way is shown this wise :—

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयः ॥ ७

तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु माम् अनु-स्मर युध्-य च ।
मयि अर्पित-मनः-बुद्धिः माम् एव ए-स्यसि अ-सम्-शयः ॥

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca* ।
*mayy arpitamanobuddhir mām evai 'ṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* in all कालेषु *kāleṣu* times माम् *māṁ* me अनुस्मर *anusmara* remember युध्य *yudhya* fight च *ca* and मयि अर्पित मनः बुद्धिः *mayi arpita manaḥ buddhiḥ* with mind and intellect fixed in me माम् *māṁ* to me एव *eva* alone एष्यसि *eṣyasi* thou shalt come असंशयः *asaṁśayaḥ* doubtless

**Therefore at all times think upon Me only and fight. With mind and understanding set on Me, you will surely come to Me.** 7

The immediate duty of Arjuna is to wage the righteous war, as it is his *svadharma*. The Lord

insentient by themselves, they get their distinctiveness by their clinging to the sentient. This fact may be clarified through two examples. In articulation, the part that the consonant plays clinging to the vowel, is analogous to the function of the elements. Again the origin and function of the skin of a fruit are analogous to the part that the elements play in the phenomenon. It is with the aid of the elements the sentient is revealing itself. Beings require the elements for their embodiment.

*Purusha* is a word pregnant with etymological meaning. Literally it means 'that by which everything is filled.' It comes from the root *pri*, to fill. Again, *Pura* or *Puri* means a city or fortress. He who resides in a *Puri* is *Purusha*. He is designated as *Adhidaivata*. He is Hiranyagarbha or the Cosmic Soul whose rays are the individual souls. All the beings in the universe are controlled by Hiranyagarbha.

Vishnu is identified with *Yajna*. His designation as *Adhiyajna* is therefore appropriate. Divinity is present wherever an act of self-sacrifice takes place. A sacrifice is at its zenith when the *Jivatman* dissolves himself completely in the Paramatman. With the surrender of his individuality, his individual consciousness gives place to Cosmic Consciousness which is the Paramatman. Therefore, wherever *Adhiyajna* takes place, the presence of the Lord is patent there. Further, Divinity is also patent in perfected beings. This is due to their having made oblation of them-

चेतसा *cetasā* with the mind न *na* not अन्यगामिना *anyagāminā* moving towards any other thing परमम् *paramaṁ* supreme पुरुषम् *puruṣaṁ* Purusha दिव्यम् *divyaṁ* the resplendent याति *yāti* goes पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha अनुचिन्तयन् *anucintayan* meditating

**With the mind not wandering after anything else, made steadfast in the yoga of constant practice, he who meditates on the Supreme, Resplendent Purusha, reaches Him, O Partha.** 8

Each *sadhaka* has his own concept of Iswara, known as his *Iṣṭa-mūrti* or chosen Deity. Life-long meditation on that phase of Iswara is *abhyāsa-yoga.* Because of his residing in the *Puri* of the body, He is known as *Purusha.* As the sun is resplendent in the physical plane, He is Resplendent in the spiritual plane. Constant thought of Him rids the *sadhaka* of body-consciousness, after the way of the ripening fruit getting itself separated from its skin. The yogi's spiritual attainment becomes evident at the time of death. It is described as follows :—

### How the Yogi Relinquishes the Body — 9-13

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ९

प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥ १०

कविम् पुराणम् अनु-शास्-इ-तारम् अणोः अणीयांसम् अनु-स्मरेत् यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारम् अ-चिन्त्य-रूपम् आदित्य-वर्णम् तमसः परस्तात् ॥

प्रयाणकाले मनसा अचलेन भक्त्या युक्तः योगबलेन च एव ।
भ्रुवोः मध्ये प्राणम् आ-वेश्य सम्यक् सः तम् परम् पुरुषम् उप-एति दिव्यम् ॥

thought of the Lord at the last moment is therefore well nigh impossible Preparation for it has to go on all through the life He who is absorbed in the thought of God while departing from the body gets merged in Cosmic Consciousness And this is *mukti* getting which there is no more return to mundane life This is the universal law, there need be no doubt about it

What becomes of those who do not think of the Lord, but get fixed in other thoughts at the time of death ? The answer comes —

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ ६

यम् यम् वा अपि स्मरन् भावम् त्यज्-अति अन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तम् तम् एव ए ति कौन्तय सदा तद्-भाव-भावित ॥

*yam-yam va 'pi smaran bhāvam tyajaty ante kalevaram* ।
*tam-tam eva 'ti kaunteya sadā tad bhāvabhāvitaḥ* ॥

यम् *yam* which यम् *yam* which वा *vā* or अपि *api* even स्मरन् *smaran* remembering भावम् *bhāvam* nature त्यजति *tyajati* leaves अन्ते *ante* in the end कलेवरम् *kalevaram* the body तम् *tam* to that तम् *tam* to that एव *eva* only एति *eti* goes कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya सदा *sadā* constantly तद्भावभावित *tad bhāva bhāvitaḥ* thinking of that object

**Whatever being a man thinks of at the last moment when he leaves his body, that alone does he attain, O Kaunteya, being ever absorbed in the thought thereof. 6**

Dream is only a projection of the mind and it has no corresponding external reality. But dream

**devotion and strength of yoga, well fixing the entire Prana in the middle of the eye-brows, he reaches Him. 9-10**

These are the fit states of the mind and *prāṇa* or life energy, when the yogi finally renounces the body and re-enters *Brahma-nirvāṇam* or the Cosmic Consciousness. Constant practice or *abhyāsa-yoga* is the sure means to achieve this sublime end. The eight-fold glory of the Lord has to be deeply meditated on daily so that the mind and intellect be cast permanently in that divine mould. The eight supermundane distinctions of Iswara are :—

*Kavi* — the Omniscient. One can discern the presence of intelligence as the background of the functioning of the entire cosmos. The personal intelligence of all beings is derived from this Cosmic Intelligence. Attuning one's personal understanding to this Pure Consciousness is meditation.

*Purāṇa* is the Ancient One. Prior to Him there is nothing. The Original Stuff of everything sentient and insentient is He.

*Anuśāsitā* is the Ruler. He designs the structure and carries out the working of the entire cosmos. Everything is included in His regime.

*Aṇoraṇīyān* is the Subtlest of the subtle. There is naught finer than Pure Consciousness. It persists because of Its subtlety.

*Sarvasya Dhātā* is He who is the Support of all. As the ocean is the support of the waves that

therefore commands him to fight Every individual has to discharge faithfully the duty that is his

There are people who neglect or give up their earthly duties on the plea that they have taken to spiritual life And there are the others who excuse themselves from spiritual practices on the plea that in the midst of their worldly engagements they have neither the time nor the inclination for anything else The sacred and the secular are incompatible, is their view But the Lord's message is to sanctify the entire life The so-called secular duty may be converted into the service of the Lord Whatever man does or thinks ought to be for the glory of the Maker By this way man's life gets perfectly enriched

The singing mendicant on the street artfully plays on the stringed instrument with one hand and with the other gracefully beats the drum fastened round his neck These two items of music serve as accompaniments to his songs In this manner, man ought to discharge his worldly duties carefully and at the same time be inclined Godward He should imbibe godly tendencies more and more

—Sri Ramakrishna

The way of leaning towards divinity is as follows —

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ ८

अभि-आस-योग-युज-तेन चेतसा न अन्य गामिना ।
परमम् पुरुषम् दिव्-यम् या ति पार्थ अनु-चिन्तयन् ॥

*abhyāsayogayuktena cetasā nā 'nyagāmina* ।
*paramam purusam divyam yāti pārthā 'nucintayan* ॥

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन *abhyāsa yoga yuktena* with the mind made steadfast by the method of habitual meditation

life are all solved by him as a matter of course. Death is no terror to him. He puts it on a par with life and faces both with the same equanimity. The yogi is ever himself, both in life and death.

*Prāṇa* or life-energy of the ordinary man leaves the body at death through the apertures. But it goes out differently when the yogi departs from the body. It gets concentrated between the eye-brows and exits through the skull. This last event is also the outcome of the strength of yoga

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ ११

यत् अ-क्षरम् वेद-विदः वद्-अ-अन्ति विश्-अ-अन्ति यत् यतयः वि-इत-रागाः ।
यत् इच्छ्-अ-अन्तः ब्रह्म-चर्यम् चर्-अ-अन्ति तद् ते पदम् सम्-ग्रह-इन प्र-वच्-स्ये ॥

*yad akṣaraṁ vedavido vadanti*
*viśanti yad yatayo vītarāgāḥ* ।
*yad icchanto brahmacaryaṁ caranti*
*tat te padaṁ saṁgraheṇa pravakṣye* ॥

यत् *yat* which अक्षरम् *akṣaraṁ* Imperishable वेदविदः *vedavidaḥ* the Veda-knowers वदन्ति *vadanti* declare विशन्ति *viśanti* enter यत् *yat* which यतयः *yatayaḥ* the self-controlled (ascetics or Sanyasins) वीतरागाः *vīta rāgāḥ* freed from attachment यत् *yat* which इच्छन्तः *icchantaḥ* desiring ब्रह्मचर्यम् *brahmacaryaṁ* celibacy चरन्ति *caranti* practise तत् *tat* that ते *te* to thee पदम् *padaṁ* goal संग्रहेण *saṁgraheṇa* in brief प्रवक्ष्ये *pravakṣye* (I) will declare

**That which the knowers of Veda call the Imperishable, and into which enter the Sanyasins, self-controlled and freed from attachment, and desiring**

*kavim purāṇam anuśāsitāram*
*anor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ* ।
*sarvasya dhātāram acintya rūpam*
*ādityavarṇam tamasaḥ parastāt* ॥

*prayāṇakāle manasā 'calena*
*bhaktyā yukto yogabalena cai 'va* ।
*bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak*
*sa tam param puruṣam upaiti divyam* ॥

कविम् *kavim* omniscient पुराणम् *purāṇam* ancient अनुशासितारम् *anuśāsitāram* the Ruler अणो *aṇoḥ* than atom अणीयासम् *aṇīyāṁsam* minuter अनुस्मरेत् *anusmaret* remembers य *yaḥ* who सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all धातारम् *dhātāram* supporter अचिन्त्य रूपम् *acintya rūpam* one whose form is inconceivable आदित्यवर्णम् *āditya varṇam* effulgent like the sun तमस *tamasaḥ* from the darkness परस्तात् *parastāt* beyond

प्रयाणकाले *prayāṇa kāle* at the time of death मनसा *manasā* with mind अचलेन *acalena* unshaken भक्त्या *bhaktyā* with devotion युक्त *yuktaḥ* joined योगबलेन *yoga balena* by the power of yoga च *ca* and एव *eva* only भ्रुवो *bhruvoḥ* of the two eye brows मध्ये *madhye* in the middle प्राणम् *prāṇam* Prana आवेश्य *āveśya* having placed सम्यक *samyak* thoroughly स *saḥ* he तम् *tam* that परम् *param* supreme पुरुषम् *puruṣam* Purusha उपैति *upaiti* reaches दिव्यम *divyam* resplendent

**The Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler, Minuter than an atom, the Supporter of all, of Form inconceivable, Effulgent like the sun, and Beyond all darkness; he who *meditates on this Resplendent, Supreme* Purusha, at the time of death, with a steady mind,**

*sarvadvārāṇi saṁyamya mano hṛdi nirudhya ca |*
*mūrdhny ādhāyā 'tmanaḥ prāṇam āsthito yogadhā*
*raṇām ||*

*aum ity ekākṣaraṁ brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran |*
*yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ sa yāti paramāṁ gatim ||*

सर्वद्वाराणि *sarva dvārāṇi* all gates संयम्य *saṁyamya* having controlled मनः *manaḥ* mind हृदि *hṛdi* in the heart निरुध्य *nirudhya* having confined च *ca* and मूर्ध्नि *mūrdhni* in the head आधाय *ādhāya* having placed आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self प्राणम् *prāṇaṁ* breath आस्थितः *āsthitaḥ* established (in) योगधारणाम् *yoga dhāraṇāṁ* practice of concentration

ॐ *Om* Om इति *iti* thus एकाक्षरम् *ekākṣaraṁ* one-syllabled ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman व्याहरन् *vyāharan* uttering माम् *māṁ* me अनुस्मरन् *anusmaran* remembering यः *yaḥ* who प्रयाति *prayāti* departs त्यजन् *tyajan* leaving देहम् *dehaṁ* the body सः *saḥ* he याति *yāti* attains परमाम् *paramāṁ* supreme गतिम् *gatiṁ* goal

**All the gates of the body closed, the mind confined within the heart, having fixed his life-energy in the head, engaged in firm yoga; uttering the one-syllabled 'Om', Brahman, thinking of Me, he who departs, leaving the body, attains the Supreme Goal. 12-13**

This is how the yogi brings his embodied existence to an end. As the river enters the ocean, the individual consciousness of the yogi merges in the Cosmic Consciousness, which is Brahman. The activities of the body and the senses all cease, as when going to sleep. As a bird returns to a tree to roost, the mind of the yogi gets settled in his heart.

have come out of it, so is Brahman the Support of the universe that has come out of It.

*Acintyarūpa* is what is Incomprehensible to the unrefined mind. It can be grasped only to the extent the mind gets purified.

*ādityavarna* is the Effulgence of the sun which is ever the same. The sun never rises nor sets though it seems so to us, in relation with the revolving earth. Paramatman undergoes no modification even as the sun does not.

*Tamasaḥ parastāt* is the state of the Paramatman being supremely Above the darkness of ignorance exactly as the sun is not affected by a patch of cloud seeming to hide it. The Effulgence of Iswara is ever itself, untouched by the modifications of *Prakriti.*

*Acala-manas, bhakti, yoga-balam* — these three divine gifts are interrelated. That mind which does not waver for any reason whatsoever, but is ever steady in its godly pursuit is endowed with the first gift. As it grows in purity, devotion which is the second gift spontaneously manifests itself in the *sadhaka.* The practice of yoga being a part and parcel of his life, he steadily rises in spiritual stature. The physical, mental and moral strength accruing from it stands him in good stead. He evolves into a sterling personality.

A man endowed with spiritual strength is fully equipped for the battle of life. Knotty problems of

*nityaśaḥ* (for a long time) daily तस्य *tasya* of him अहम् *ahaṁ* I सुलभः *sulabhaḥ* easily attainable पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha नित्ययुक्तस्य *nitya yuktasya* ever-steadfast योगिनः *yoginaḥ* of yogi

**I am easily attainable, O Partha, by that ever-steadfast yogi, who constantly remembers Me daily and thinks of none else. 14**

Just as material wealth gets added only to those who already own it, so the grace of the Lord is ever on the increase to those yogis who have made themselves worthy of it. The Lord is ever available to those who seek Him. It is the ignorant man that alienates himself from the Lord.

When we take one stride towards the Lord, He takes ten strides towards us. — Sri Ramakrishna

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५

माम् उप-इ-य पुनः-जन्म दुःख-आलयम् अ-शाश्वतम् ।
न आप्-नु-अन्ति महा-आत्मानः सं-सिध्-तिम् परमां गम्-ताः ॥

*mām upetya punarjanma duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam ।*
*nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ ॥*

माम् *mām* to me उपेत्य *upetya* having attained पुनः *punaḥ* again जन्म *janma* birth दुःखालयम् *duḥkhālayaṁ* the place of pain अशाश्वतम् *aśāśvataṁ* non-eternal न *na* not आप्नुवन्ति *āpnuvanti* get महात्मानः *mahātmānaḥ* Mahatmas or the great souls संसिद्धिम् *saṁsiddhiṁ* to perfection परमाम् *paramāṁ* highest गताः *gatāḥ* having reached

**which they lead a life of continence, that I shall declare to you with brevity. 11**

Nature is the Veda come from God; Scripture is the Veda come from the Enlightened Ones. Both of these forms of the Veda complement each other. The knowers of the Veda by either way, state that the Imperishable Brahman is the substratum of the perishing universe.

Sanyasins are they who are not tainted by worldly desires and who live the rigid life of continence.

Through Brahmacharya or continence the physical energy in man gets converted into spiritual energy. The faculty of understanding gets keen thereby. Intuition is the outcome of that exalted *discipline.*

He who wants to become spiritual should not lustfully look at even the picture of a woman. Spirituality is not where lust is The *sadhaka* established in *Brahmacharya* develops a faculty known as *medha* which promotes his spiritual knowledge.

**— Sri Ramakrishna**

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।
मूर्ध्न्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ १३

सर्व-द्वाराणि सम्-यम्-य मनः हृदि नि रुध्-य च ।
मूर्ध्नि आ-धा-य आत्मन. प्राणम् आ-स्थितः योग-धारणाम् ॥

ओम् इति एक-अ-क्षरम् ब्रह्म वि-आ हरन् माम् अनु-स्मर्-अ-अन् ।
यः प्र-या-ति त्यज्-अ-अन् देहम् स· या-ति परमाम् गतिम् ॥

*Brahma-loka.* But all these worlds are subject to mutation and repetition, because of their being under the sway of time, space and causation. While the beings in all these worlds are compelled by their karma to be reborn, only those who go to *Brahma-loka* have two alternatives. The liberation-seekers among them work for it in that highest region and gain *krama-mukti* or progressive liberation when the entire universe dissolves in *pralaya.* But the enjoyment-seekers among them are forced by their karma to take new births.

When the boiled paddy is sown in the field it sprouts not. Even so, when a perfected person puts away the body, he is not born again.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**Brahma, the Creator's Standard of Time — 17-19**

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७

सहस्र-युग-पर्यन्तम् अहः यत् ब्रह्मणः विदुः ।
रात्रिम् युग-सहस्र-अन्ताम् ते अहः-रात्र-विदः जनाः ॥

*sahasrayugaparyantam ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ* ।
*rātriṁ yugasahasrāntāṁ te 'horātravido janāḥ* ॥

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम् *sahasra yuga paryantaṁ* ending in a thousand Yugas (ages) अहः *ahaḥ* day यत् *yat* which ब्रह्मणः *brahmaṇaḥ* of Brahma विदुः *viduḥ* know रात्रिम् *rātriṁ* the night युगसहस्रान्ताम् *yuga sahasrāntāṁ* ending in a thousand Yugas (ages) ते *te* they अहोरात्रविदः *aho rātra vidaḥ* knowers of day and night जनाः *janāḥ* people

at the time of death Contrary to this, the mind of the worldly wanders woefully on mundane things Cold spreads all over the body as *prāna* leaves it As a traveller goes to a vehicle station, the *prāna* of the yogi finally comes to the head For this reason the yogi's head is the last region from which warmth vanishes It is *Yogadhārana* for the mind to be fixed in Iswara at the time of departure The sound vibration 'Om' persists then The spiritual content of this vibration is experienced as Infinite Bliss and Brilliance of the Pure Consciousness This *Brahmanirvānam* is the Supreme Goal attained by the yogi

The formative thought that dominates the mind of the one who leaves the body, is the factor that governs and contributes to the next birth of that individual Spiritual discipline is therefore imperative to one and all The devotee of the Lord is ever immersed in the thought of God Being firmly fixed in it, he reaches the Lord on giving up the body

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The way of getting fixed in the thought of God is as follows —

**The State of Non return — 14-16**

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ १४

अन्-अन्य-चेता सततम् य माम् स्मर्-अति नित्यश ।
तस्य अहम् सु-लभ पार्थ नित्य युक्त-तस्य योगिन ॥

*ananyacetāḥ satatam yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ* ।
*tasyā 'ham sulabhaḥ pārtha nityayuktasya yoginaḥ* ॥

अनन्यचेता *ananya cetāḥ* with the mind not thinking of any other object सततम् *satatam* constantly य *yaḥ* who माम् *mām* me स्मरति *smarati* remembers नित्यश

अ-वि-अक्तात् वि-अक्तयः सर्वाः प्र-भवन्ति अहः-आ-गमे ।
रात्रि-आ-गमे प्र-ली-यन्ते तत्र एव अ-वि-अक्त-संज्ञके ॥

*avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavanty aharāgame |*
*rātry āgame pralīyante tatrai 'vā 'vyaktasaṁjñake ||*

अव्यक्तात् *avyaktāt* from the unmanifested व्यक्तयः *vyaktayaḥ* the manifested सर्वाः *sarvāḥ* all प्रभवन्ति *prabhavanti* proceed अहरागमे *aharāgame* at the coming of day रात्रि आगमे *rātri āgame* at the coming of night प्रलीयन्ते *pralīyante* dissolve तत्र *tatra* there एव *eva* verily अव्यक्तसंज्ञके *avyakta saṁjñake* in that which is called the unmanifested

**At the coming of day all manifest beings proceed from the unmanifested, and at the coming of night they merge again in the same which is called the unmanifested. 18**

The plan of Nature is the same both in the macrocosm and the microcosm. In accordance with it, when a *Jivatman* goes to sleep the world projected from his mind gets withdrawn into it. The manifest and the unmanifest states of his world are all related to the wakefulness or otherwise of his mind. Similarly the macrocosmos comes into being when Brahma wakes up and it helplessly vanishes into the unmanifested state when he goes to sleep. His day and night function on a universal basis. Creation, preservation and destruction of the universe are all contained in the states of the mind of Brahma. And this is an eternal cosmic play.

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९

**Having come to Me, the great souls are no more subject to rebirth, which is transitory and the abode of pain; for they have reached the highest perfection.**

Man gets whatever he has made himself worthy of. The Lord gives Himself over to the devotee worthy of Him; and there is no gain greater than this. Having gained God, the devotee is in Eternal Beatitude. The wheel of birth and death does not touch him any more.

The difference between the wheel of birth and death and the Eternal Beatitude is explained as follows :—

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ १६

आ-ब्रह्मभुवनात् लोकाः पुनः-आ-वर्तिनः अर्जुन ।
माम् उप-इ-य तु कौन्तेय पुनः-जन्म न विद्-य-ते ॥

*ā brahmabhuvanāl lokāḥ punarāvartino 'rjuna* ।
*mām upetya tu kaunteya punarjanma na vidyate* ॥

आब्रह्मभुवनात् *ā brahma bhuvanāt* upto the world of Brahma लोकाः *lokāḥ* worlds पुनरावर्तिन. *punarāvartinaḥ* subject to return अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna माम् *mām* to me उपेत्य *upetya* having attained तु *tu* but कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya पुनर्जन्म *punar janma* rebirth न *na* not विद्यते *vidyate* is

**All worlds including that of Brahma are subject to return, O Arjuna; but on reaching me, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth. 16**

Different planes of existence are known as the various worlds, the highest among them being the

परः तस्मात् तु भावः अन्यः अ-वि-अक्तः अ-वि-अक्तात् सना-तनः ।
यः सः सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्-यत्सु न वि-नश्-यति ॥

*paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ* ।
*yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati* ॥

परः *paraḥ* higher तस्मात् *tasmāt* than that तु *tu* but भावः *bhāvaḥ* existence अन्यः *anyaḥ* another अव्यक्तः *avyaktaḥ* unmanifested अव्यक्तात् *avyaktāt* than the unmanifested सनातनः *sanātanaḥ* eternal यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* that सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* in all भूतेषु *bhūteṣu* in beings नश्यत्सु *naśyatsu* in being destroyed न *na* not विनश्यति *vinaśyati* is destroyed

**But beyond this unmanifested, there is yet another Unmanifested Eternal Existence which does not perish even when all existences perish. 20**

In the existence of things there are two phases—the relative and the absolute. Water exists as vapour, steam, mist, fog, snow and in several other states which are all perishing and perishable. These varying states, therefore, of water are all relative existences. But this substance as such persists in the midst of its modifications. Its persistence is its absolute existence and its perishing forms and modifications, its relative existence. Similar to this, Brahma, the Creator and his Creation have their relative existence and absolute existence too. Their perishing nature is their relative existence. To enter into the unmanifested state even as the vapour does, is one phase of the phenomenal universe; to become manifest to the senses and intellect is its other phase. The manifest state and the unmanifest state of the universe and its beings come within relative exist-

**Those who know that the day of Brahma lasts a thousand Yugas and that his night lasts a thousand Yugas, they are the knowers of day and night. 17**

The part that time plays in the lives of beings is a factor worth studying There are creatures within our ken, that complete their career and fulfil themselves in the course of a few days or weeks The question of want of time does not arise in their cases

Brahma, the Creator is also a *Jivatman* having cosmic function to fulfil and wending his way towards *mukti* That Purusha who attains *Prakriti-laya* or the universal power and efficiency in a previous *kalpa* or cycle, becomes Brahma in a succeeding cycle Countless eons of ours put together form a day to Brahma and a similar expanse of time, his night That way Brahma has his day and night, his own months and years and his own full span of life Our understanding staggers in conceiving his life time It expands into infinity, so to say Still Brahma, the Creator also has his wheel of birth and death and emancipation too from that wheel He gets into *krama mukti* after his span of life, vacating his place for the succeeding Brahma Those of us who understand this cosmic design, understand what is meant by the wheel of time, the wheel of birth and death and emancipation from this relativity This intellectual grasp is an aid for our seeking *mukti* from the wheel of birth and death

अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८

difference between the two has to be borne in mind. *Prakriti* is *ksharam*, perishable while Brahman is *Aksharam*, Imperishable. Beings involved in *Prakriti* continue to appear and disappear; beings that attain Brahman do not undergo these changes. They do not return. Brahman being the highest and constant abode for beings, It is called the Lord's Supreme Abode.

The way to attain It is :—

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२

पुरुषः सः परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ-यः तु अन्-अन्यया ।
यस्य अन्तः-स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वम् इदम् ततम् ॥

*puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha bhaktyā labhyas tv ananyayā* ।
*yasyā 'ntaḥsthāni bhūtāni yena sarvam idaṁ tatam* ॥

पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* Purusha सः *saḥ* that परः *paraḥ* highest पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha भक्त्या *bhaktyā* by devotion लभ्यः *labhyaḥ* is attainable तु *tu* verily अनन्यया *ananyayā* without another object यस्य *yasya* of whom अन्तः स्थानि *antaḥ sthāni* dwelling within भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings येन *yena* by whom सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इदम् *idaṁ* this ततम् *tataṁ* pervaded

**That Supreme Purusha, O Partha, is attainable by unswerving devotion to Him alone within whom all beings dwell, by whom all this is pervaded. 22**

*Ananya bhakti* is the devotion of non-separation. It is the outcome of the right understanding of the relationship between the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman. They are interrelated in the way in which the sea and the waves are interrelated. The waves do

भूत ग्राम स॰ एव अयम् भू-त्वा भू त्वा प्र लीयते ।
रात्रि-आ-गमे अ वश पार्थ प्र-भवति अह -आ गमे ॥

*bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evā 'yam bhūtvā-bhūtvā pralıyate* ।
*rātry āgame 'vaśah pārtha prabhavaty aharāgame* ॥

भूतग्राम *bhūta grāmaḥ* multitude of beings स *saḥ* that एव *eva* verily अयम् *ayam* this भूत्वा भूत्वा *bhūtvā bhūtvā* being born again and again प्रलीयते *pralıyate* dissolves रात्रि आगमे *rātri āgame* at the coming of night अवश *avaśaḥ* helpless पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha प्रभवति *prabhavatı* comes forth अहरागमे *aharāgame* at the coming of day

**This multitude of beings, coming forth again and again, merge, O Partha, in spite of themselves, at the approach of night, and remanifest themselves at the approach of day.** **19**

Man's free-will is a misnomer Beyond a certain limit man has not got the freedom to keep awake or to go to sleep. He is a helpless creature of his own mind given to the modifications of wakefulness and sleep Much more helplessly than this, the multitude of beings are dragged into creation or the manifest state when Brahma wakes up and they go into the unmanifested when he retires to sleep The process of being revolved in this wheel of birth and death has to go on indefinitely, sometimes even through the life periods of a few Brahmas, until perfection is reached and *mukti* obtained

Immortality — 20 22

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ २०

*agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam* ।
*tatra prayātā gacchanti brahma brahmavido janāḥ* ॥

अग्निः *agniḥ* fire ज्योतिः *jyotiḥ* light अहः *ahaḥ* day शुक्लः *śuklaḥ* the bright fortnight षण्मासाः *ṣaṇmāsāḥ* six months उत्तरायणम् *uttarāyaṇaṁ* the northern path of the sun तत्र *tatra* there प्रयाताः *prayātāḥ* departed गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* go ब्रह्म *brahma* to Brahman ब्रह्मविदः *brahma-vidaḥ* Brahma-knowing जनाः *janāḥ* people

**Fire, light, day-time, the bright half of the moon, and the six months of the northern path of the sun, then going forth, the knowers of Brahman go to Brahman.** **24**

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५

धूमः रात्रिः तथा कृष्णः षड् मासाः दक्षिण-अयनम् ।
तत्र चान्द्रमसम् ज्योतिः योगी प्र-आप्-य नि-वर्त-अते ॥

*dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ ṣaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanam* ।
*tatra cāndramasaṁ jyotir yogī prāpya nivartate* ॥

धूमः *dhūmaḥ* smoke रात्रिः *rātriḥ* night तथा *tathā* also कृष्णः *kṛṣṇaḥ* the dark (fortnight) षण्मासाः *ṣaṇmāsāḥ* the six months दक्षिणायनम् *dakṣiṇāyanaṁ* the southern path of the sun तत्र *tatra* there चान्द्रमसम् *cāndramasaṁ* lunar ज्योतिः *jyotiḥ* light योगी *yogī* the yogi प्राप्य *prāpya* having attained निवर्तते *nivartate* returns

**Smoke, night, the dark half of the moon, and the six months of the southern passage of the sun, then going forth, the yogi obtains the lunar light and returns.** **25**

ence But there is an Absolute Existence which is Eternal and ever Unmanifest It never becomes the object of perception It is ever the Thing in Itself

But what have we, as perishable beings, to do with It the Imperishable? The answer comes —

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ २१

अ वि अक्त अ-क्षर इति उच् त तम् आहु परमाम् गतिम् ।
यम् प्र-आप्-य न नि-वर्तन्ते तत् धाम परमम् मम ॥

*avyakto 'ksara ity uktas tam āhuḥ paramām gatim* ।
*yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama* ॥

अव्यक्त *avyaktaḥ* unmanifested अक्षर *aksaraḥ* imperishable इति *iti* thus उक्त *uktaḥ* called तम् *tam* that आहु *āhuḥ* (they) say परमाम् *paramām* the highest गतिम् *gatim* goal यम् *yam* which प्राप्य *prāpya* having reached न *na* not निवर्तन्ते *nivartante* return तत् *tat* that धाम *dhāma* abode परमम् *paramam* highest मम *mama* my

**This Unmanifested is called the Imperishable; It is said to be the Ultimate Goal. Those who attain to It return not. That is My Supreme Abode. 21**

Brahman is this Unmanifested Reality It is designated in this way because It is incomprehensible and inaccessible to the mind, intellect and the senses It is further designated as the Imperishable because of Its being ever constant undergoing no modification whatsoever.

*Prakriti* also is called the unmanifested when it is in *pralaya* or dissolution It is then inaccessible to the mind, intellect and the senses. But the

dies in the day-time progresses and he who dies at night lags behind. But day-time can easily be created to a dying soul in these days with the help of an aeroplane. This means that man's spiritual progress depends on the physical amenities he is able to command, which is also absurd. The northern path of the sun is held auspicious because of its warmth and brightness to those living in countries to the north of the equator. But by air transport to Australia and South America during the southern path of the sun, a dying man on the northern hemisphere can be placed in a favourable situation for his taking to the path of light. The dark half of the moon is the only natural event which man cannot counteract. But reason revolts against the belief that the exit of man from the earth during one fortnight aids his upward march and that the other hinders it. The attainments of the departing souls also do not warrant this position. Man having conquered time, space and causation to a great extent, these factors in nature cannot in any way contribute to his taking to the path of light or that of smoke.

The two paths mentioned here are the allegorical expressions of the paths of knowledge and ignorance. The soul pursuing the path of knowledge gets progressively into the brilliance of Atman. That other soul which is steeped in ignorance stagnates and deteriorates. Death is the indicator of the attainments of a soul in the span of a life. As a lamp brightens up just at the last moment of its becoming extinguished, a man pursuing the path of

not have any existence independent of the sea. Similarly *Jivatman* is no entity apart from Paramatman. He who understands this fact cannot help having unswerving devotion to the Lord. When the individuality of the *Jivatman* is forgotten in the absorption in the Lord, it is then the devotion of non-separation.

God is in all beings, but all beings are not in God.

— Sri Ramakrishna

**The Paths of Light and Darkness — 23-26**

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३

यत्र काले तु अन्-आ-वृत्-तिम् आ-वृत्-तिम् च एव योगिनः ।
प्र-या-ताः या-अन्ति तम् कालम् (ब्रू) वच्-स्यामि भरत-ऋषभ ॥

*yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim āvṛttim cai 'va yoginaḥ* ।
*prayātā yānti taṁ kālaṁ vakṣyāmi bharata ṛṣabha* ॥

यत्र *yatra* where काले *kāle* in time तु *tu* verily अनावृत्तिम् *anāvṛttiṁ* non-return आवृत्तिम् *āvṛttiṁ* return च *ca* and एव *eva* even योगिनः *yoginaḥ* yogis प्रयाताः *prayātāḥ* departing यान्ति *yānti* go to तम् *taṁ* that कालम् *kālaṁ* time वक्ष्यामि *vakṣyāmi* (I) will tell भरत ऋषभ *bharata ṛṣabha* O chief of Bharatas

**Now I shall tell you, O the best of the Bharatas, the time in which the yogis depart never to return and also the time in which they depart to return. 23**

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४

अग्निः ज्योतिः अहः शुक्लः षड् मासाः उत्तर-अयनम् ।
तत्र प्र-या-ताः गम् (गच्छ्) अ-अन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्म-विदः जनाः ॥

into the several aspects of yoga. In doing so the yogi pursues the path of light.

In whatever direction the ship may sail, the needle of the compass in it ever points to the north. Similar to it, let the mind of the devotee be ever fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord, irrespective of his occupation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥ २८

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु च एव दानेषु यत् पुण्य-फलम् प्र-दिश्-तम् ।
अति-एति तत् सर्वम् इदम् विद्-इ-त्वा योगी परम् स्थानम् उप-एति च आद्यम् ॥

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu cai 'va*
*dāneṣu yat puṇyaphalaṁ pradiṣṭam* ।
*atyeti tat sarvam idaṁ viditvā*
*yogī paraṁ sthānam upaiti cā 'dyam* ॥

वेदेषु *vedeṣu* in the Vedas यज्ञेषु *yajñeṣu* in sacrifices तपःसु *tapaḥsu* in austerities च *ca* and एव *eva* also दानेषु *dāneṣu* in gifts यत् *yat* whatever पुण्यफलम् *puṇya phalaṁ* fruit of merit प्रदिष्टम् *pradiṣṭaṁ* is declared अत्येति *atyeti* goes beyond तत् *tat* that सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इदम् *idaṁ* this विदित्वा *viditvā* having known योगी *yogī* the yogi परम् *paraṁ* supreme स्थानम् *sthānaṁ* abode उपैति *upaiti* attains च *ca* and आद्यम् *ādyaṁ* primeval

**The yogi who knows this transcends tne fruits of meritorious deeds attached to the study of the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and gifts, and attains to the supreme primeval Abode. 28**

This chapter commenced with seven questions raised by Arjuna. And the Lord has answered all of them in order. He who understands the explana-

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ २६

शुक्ल कृष्णे गती हि एते जगत. शाश्वते मन्-ते ।
एकया याति अन्-आ-वृत्-तिम् अन्यया आ-वर्तते पुन ॥

*suklakrsne gati hy ete jagatah sasvate mate* ।
*ekaya yaty anavrttim anyaya 'vartate punah* ॥

शुक्लकृष्णे *sukla krsne* bright and dark गती *gatī* (two) paths हि *hi* verily एते *ete* these जगत *jagatah* of the world शाश्वते *sāsvate* eternal मते *mate* are thought एकया *ekayā* by one याति *yāti* (he) goes अनावृत्तिम् *anāvrttim* to non-return अन्यया *anyayā* by another आवर्तते *āvartate* (he) returns पुन *punah* again

**The bright and the dark, these paths are deemed to be the world's eternal paths; by the one a man goes, not to return, by the other he returns again. 26**

What is contained in these three stanzas is a matter for thought The *Jivatmas* transmigrating through death pass along two paths known as *devayāna* and *pitryāna* They are described as the path of light and the path of smoke respectively The former is bright and the latter dark. The one leads the soul to regions higher and the other keeps him lingering and lagging long behind. A literal meaning of these stanzas leads us into a ludicrous impossibility. Fire and light are held to take the departing soul upward. There is no difficulty whatsoever in creating this favourable environment to a dying soul. If this situation ensures an upward progress, ethical and spiritual endeavours become superfluous, which is absurd. It is further stated that he who

# राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगः

## RAJAVIDYA RAJAGUHYA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF SOVEREIGN SCIENCE AND SOVEREIGN SECRET

## CHAPTER IX

The Relationship between Saguna Brahman and Prakriti — The Ways of the Ignorant — The Ways of the Devoted — Iswara is Everything — The Way of the Enjoyment-seekers — Man Gets What He Seeks — Worship of Iswara is the Easiest — The Neutral Iswara is the Votary's Own.

**The Relationship between Saguna Brahman and Prakriti — 1-10**

श्री भगवानुवाच

इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १

इदम् तु ते गुह्य-तमम् प्र-वच्-स्यामि अन्-असूयवे ।
ज्ञानम् वि-ज्ञान-सहितम् यत् ज्ञा-त्वा मोक्-स्यसे अ-शुभात् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*
*idaṁ tu te guhyatamaṁ pravakṣyāmy anasūyave* ।
*jñānaṁ vijñānasahitaṁ yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

इदम् *idaṁ* this तु *tu* indeed ते *te* to thee गुह्यतमम् *guhyatamaṁ* greatest secret प्रवक्ष्यामि *pravakṣyāmi* (I) shall declare अनसूयवे *anasūyave* to one who does not cavil ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge विज्ञानसहितम् *vijñāna sahitaṁ* combined with realization यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known मोक्ष्यसे *mokṣyase* thou shalt be free अशुभात् *aśubhāt* from evil

The Blessed Lord said:

**To you who do not cavil, I shall surely declare this, the most profound knowledge combined with realization by knowing which you will be released from evil.** **1**

knowledge gets into the clarity of awareness while leaving the body. The intensity of the awareness is compared with fire, light, day-time, the bright half of the moon and the six months of the northern path of the sun or more accurately the brighter path of the sun. Contrary to it, the darkness of the ignorance in the other man becomes increasingly enshrouded as is mentioned herein Blessed are they who pursue the path of light in their succeeding births, till the goal is reached.

**Be Ever a Yogi — 27-28**

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ २७

न एते सृती पार्थ जानन् योगी मुह् यति क -चन ।
तस्माद् सर्वेषु कालेषु योग-युक्त भव अर्जुन ॥

*nai 'te srti pārtha jānan yogi muhyati kaścana* ।
*tasmāt sarvesu kālesu yogayukto bhavā 'rjuna* ॥

न *na* not एते *ete* these सृती *srti* two paths पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha जानन् *jānan* knowing योगी *yogī* the yogi मुह्यति *muhyati* is deluded कश्चन *kaścana* anyone तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore सर्वेषु *sarvesu* in all कालेषु *kālesu* times योगयुक्त *yoga yuktah* steadfast in yoga भव *bhava* be (thou) अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

**Knowing these two paths, O Partha, no yogi is deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, be steadfast in yoga, at all times. 27**

As living the embodied life is a constant process, the practice of yoga also should be an interminable effort. All the activities in life may be transformed

**The sovereign science, the sovereign secret, the supreme purifier is this; directly realizable, in accord with dharma, very easy to practise and imperishable**

The public road is called *rāja-pātha.* The yoga common to all religions is called *rāja-yoga.* Similarly *Brahma-jnana* which is the birthright of all is called *rāja-vidyā.* All are entitled to it and they are wending their way to it knowingly or unknowingly. If so, can all get at *Brahma-jnana* as unfailingly as all are able to procure food for the body? No, the impure in heart cannot have access to it. The purity of the mind is the criterion for it. They alone shall inherit this Divine Treasure who are perfectly pure at heart. But those that have not yet refined the mind, those that are given to cavil and such like defects will not be able to grasp it even. To them it is the sovereign secret. This science is a sealed book to them. As water cleanses the body, *Brahma-jnana* cleanses the *Jivatman* of his fallen state and reinstates him in Brahmanhood. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. *Brahma-vidyā* is therefore the supreme purifier.

A man who wakes up from a dreadful dream brushes aside his agony as a mere fiction of his mind. The mundane life itself is a misery-laden prolonged dream from which the *Brahma-jnani* wakes up into the bliss of Reality. Thenceforth his life gets fixed in Truth. Therefore it is bound to be in accord with dharma. Self-knowledge is the home-coming of the *Jivatman,* and so it is very easy to practise. There is a possibility of a thing easily

tion understands *Akshara Brahman* The regular chanting of the Vedas, the correct performance of the ritualistic *Yajnas*, the ardent doing of the austerities and the reverent payment of gifts are all meritorious acts conducive to the attainment of *Svarga* or heaven But this high state also comes within the wheel of birth and death On the other hand, an intellectual grasp of *Akshara Brahman* and attuning oneself to the attainment of Him steadily lead one towards that Supreme Goal Blessed is the yogi that wends his way towards this primeval Abode

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नाम
अष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām*
*yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṃvāde akṣarabrahma*
*yogo nāma aṣṭamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN

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मया तन्-तम् इदम् सर्वम् जगत् अ-वि-अक्त-मूर्तिना ।
मद्-स्थानि सर्व-भूतानि न च अहम् तेषु अव-स्थितः ॥

*mayā tatam idaṁ sarvam jagad avyakta mūrtinā* ।
*matsthāni sarva bhūtāni na cā 'haṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ* ॥

मया *mayā* by me ततम् *tataṁ* pervaded इदम् *idaṁ* this सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all जगत् *jagat* world अव्यक्तमूर्तिना *avyakta mūrtinā* of the unmanifested form मत्स्थानि *mat sthāni* exist in me सर्वभूतानि *sarva bhūtāni* all beings न *na* not च *ca* and अहम् *ahaṁ* I तेषु *teṣu* in them अवस्थितः *avasthitaḥ* placed

**All this universe is pervaded by Me in My unmanifested form; all beings exist in Me, but I do not abide in them.** **4**

As waves take their origin from the sea and sport on it, all beings from Brahma down to a blade of grass take their origin in Brahman and rest on Him. As the sea is not contained in the waves, the unmanifest Brahman is not contained in the manifest beings. He is infinite while these are all finite.

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ ५

न च मद्-स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगम् ऐश्वरम् ।
भू-त-भृत् न च भू-त-स्थः मम आत्मा भूत-भावनः ॥

*na ca matsthāni bhūtāni paśya me yogaṁ aiśvaraṁ* ।
*bhūtabhṛn na ca bhūtastho mamā 'tmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ* ॥

न *na* not च *ca* and मत्स्थानि *matsthāni* dwelling in me भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings पश्य *paśya* behold मे *me* my योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga ऐश्वरम् *aiśvaraṁ* divine भूतभृत् *bhūta-bhṛt* supporting the beings न *na* not च *ca* and भूतस्थः

Mundane life itself is an evil, and ignorance is the basis of this transitory life. It is because of ignorance that man embraces evil and suffers from its consequences. Mere intellectual knowledge of Atman would not free man from misery. It requires to be combined with realization which is the real *Brahma-jnana*. The man of Self-knowledge alone is free from evil and its outcome, misery.

Cavil which is born of conceit and jealousy is a rotten disease of the mind that prevents man from rising in knowledge and wisdom. It robs him of divine disposition. Arjuna is no victim to this canker; he is all magnanimity and broad-mindedness. He is therefore eminently fit for the most profound knowledge combined with realization.

The merits of *Brahma-jnana* are as follows:—

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २

राजन्-विद्या राजन्-गुह्यम् पवित्रम् इदम् उद्-तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्ष-अव-गमम् धर्म्यम् सु-सुखम् (कृ) कर्-तुम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*rājavidyā rājaguhyam pavitram idam uttamam* ।
*pratyakṣāvagamaṁ dharmyam susukham kartum avyayam* ॥

राजविद्या *rājavidyā* the king of sciences राजगुह्यम् *rājaguhyaṁ* kingly secret पवित्रम् *pavitraṁ* purifier इदम् *idaṁ* this उत्तमम् *uttamam* highest प्रत्यक्ष अवगमम् *pratyakṣa avagamaṁ* realizable by direct intuition धर्म्यम् *dharmyam* according to righteousness सुसुखम् *susukhaṁ* very easy कर्तुम् *kartum* to perform अव्ययम् *avyayam* imperishable

**As the mighty wind moving everywhere ever rests in the Akasa, know you that so do all beings rest in Me.** **6**

Akasa is the origin and background of the other four elements. At the same time it remains unattached to the other elements. Even so the manifested universe that has come forth from Brahman causes no modification or mutation in Him. An understanding of the way of Akasa aids the comprehension of Brahman.

Though the wind carries the good and bad odour alike it remains unaffected by both. Para-Brahman is in this wise unaffected by the phenomenal universe.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७

सर्व-भूतानि कौन्तेय प्र-कृ-तिम् या-अन्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्प-क्षये पुनः तानि कल्प-आदौ वि-सृजामि अहम् ॥

*sarva bhūtāni kaunteya prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikām* ।
*kalpakṣaye punas tāni kalpādau visṛjāmy aham* ॥

सर्वभूतानि *sarva bhūtāni* all beings कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtiṁ* to Prakriti यान्ति *yānti* go मामिकाम् *māmikāṁ* my कल्पक्षये *kalpakṣaye* at the end of the Kalpa पुनः *punaḥ* again तानि *tāni* them कल्पादौ *kalpādau* at the beginning of a Kalpa विसृजामि *visṛjāmi* send forth अहम् *ahaṁ* I

**All beings O Kaunteya, go into My Prakriti at the end of a Kalpa. I generate them again at the beginning of the next Kalpa.** **7**

obtained being easily lost also But *Brahma jnana* being one's Original State, is never lost any more than the man losing himself It is imperishable

For whom is this plenitude impossible? The answer comes —

अश्रद्दधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥ ३

अ-श्रद्दधाना पुरुषा धर्मस्य अस्य परम्-तप ।
अ प्र आप्-य माम् नि वर्तन्ते मृत्यु-सम्-सार-वर्त्मनि ॥

*aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā dharmasyā 'sya paramtapa* |
*aprāpya mām nivartante mrtyu samsāra vartmani* ||

अश्रद्दधाना *aśraddadhānāḥ* without faith पुरुषा *puruṣaḥ* men धर्मस्य *dharmasya* of duty अस्य *asya* of this परंतप *paramtapa* O scorcher of foes अप्राप्य *aprāpya* without attaining माम् *mām* me निवर्तन्ते *nivartante* return मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि *mrtyu samsāra vartmani* in the path of this world of death

**Men devoid of Sraddha for this dharma do not attain Me, O oppressor of the foes, but return to the path of the mortal world. 3**

A fish on land, that does not know that there is water within its reach has to suffer necessarily Men who do not know and who do not care to know of *moksha dharma* or the path of deliverance have no alternative to being repeatedly born in this world of transmigration and transitory pleasure For want of *sraddha* they suffer as destitutes

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ ४

a shake up. In all these acts spirit is infused into matter. At the beginning of a *kalpa*, *Prakriti* comes from the unmanifest to the manifest state, being animated by the *Purusha*. Beings then helplessly and spontaneously come into existence even as we helplessly wake up from sleep.

Does this mean that the actionless Atman also is occasionally active? No. The clarification comes:-

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ।
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥ ९

न च माम् तानि कर्माणि नि-बध्-नन्ति धनम्-जय ।
उद्-आसीनवत् आसीनम् अ-सक्तम् तेषु कर्मसु ॥

*na ca māṁ tāni karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanaṁjaya* ।
*udāsīnavad āsīnam asaktaṁ teṣu karmasu* ॥

न *na* not च *ca* and माम् *māṁ* me तानि *tāni* these कर्माणि *karmāṇi* acts निबध्नन्ति *nibadhnanti* bind धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* O Dhananjaya उदासीनवत् *udāsīnavat* like one indifferent आसीनम् *āsīnaṁ* sitting असक्तम् *asaktaṁ* unattached तेषु *teṣu* in those कर्मसु *karmasu* acts

**Nor do these acts, O Dhananjaya, bind Me who remain like one unconcerned, unattached to these acts.** 9

The very presence of the school master induces the student to his studies. Likewise the very proximity of Iswara prevails on *Prakriti* to carry on her activities of creation, preservation and destruction. Theology designates Iswara as the male principle and *Prakriti* as the female principle, spoused to Him. Karma pertains to *Prakriti* and not to Iswara. The power of execution comes to her from her Lord who

*bhūtasthaḥ* dwelling in the beings मम *mama* my आत्मा *ātmā* self भूतभावनः *bhūta bhāvanaḥ* bringing forth beings

**Nor do the beings dwell in Me, behold My divine yoga! Bringing forth and supporting the beings, My Self does not dwell in them.** **5**

While truly reflecting the objects placed before it, a mirror ever remains unaffected by its function. Similar to this, Brahman has the divine yoga power to bring forth the universe and the beings out of Himself. There is a grandeur, uniformity, precision, plan and purpose in projecting, preserving and withholding the universe. But Brahman is ever Himself, in the midst of this sport. He is unattached and unaffected by the phenomenon. Compare chapter seven, stanza twelve.

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥ ६

यथा आकाश- (स्था) स्थि-त. नित्यम् वायुः सर्वत्र-गः महान् ।
तथा सर्वाणि भू-तानि मद्-स्थानि इति उप-धारय ॥

*yathā 'kāśasthito nityam vāyuḥ sarvatrago mahān* ।
*tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni matsthānī 'ty upadhāraya* ॥

यथा *yathā* as आकाशस्थितः *ākāśasthitaḥ* rests in the Akasa नित्यम् *nityam* always वायुः *vāyuḥ* the air सर्वत्रगः *sarvatragaḥ* moving everywhere महान् *mahān* great तथा *tathā* so सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* all भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings मत्स्थानि *matsthāni* rest in me इति *iti* thus उपधारय *upadhāraya* know

Lord states "I generate them again at the beginning of the next *Kalpa.*" *Prakriti* is here only an instrument in His hands. He next says that he animates His *Prakriti* to do that work thereby making her semi-responsible for her work. Thirdly all responsibility is placed on *Prakriti* and the Lord is just a Witness, unconcerned and unattached. Finally, *Prakriti* derives her power of action because of the proximity of Iswara. It is like the creative forces of the sunbeams owing their potentiality to the sun himself.

*Adhyaksha* is he who presides over a proceeding and keeps an alert eye on it. Iswara is in that position. In His August Presence everything in the regime of *Prakriti* goes on well. He is therefore the actionless Almighty.

**The Ways of the Ignorant — 11-12**

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११

अव-जानन्ति माम् मूढाः मानुषीम् तनुम्-आ-श्रि-तम् ।
परम् भावम् अ-जानन्तः मम भूत-महा-ईश्वरम् ॥

*avajānanti māṁ mūḍhā mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam* ।
*paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto mama bhūta maheśvaram* ॥

अवजानन्ति *avajānanti* disregard माम् *māṁ* me मूढाः *mūḍhāḥ* fools मानुषीम् *mānuṣīṁ* human तनुम् *tanuṁ* form आश्रितम् *āśritaṁ* refuged (in) परम् *paraṁ* higher भावम् *bhāvaṁ* state or nature अजानन्तः *ajānantaḥ* not knowing मम *mama* my भूतमहेश्वरम् *bhūta maheśvaraṁ* the Great Lord of beings

When Brahma the Creator goes to sleep it is the end of a *kalpa*, extending into a thousand *yugās* It works into an incalculable crores of years of the human standard Then the entire manifestation goes into the unmanifest state and remains dormant for an equally long period which is Brahma's night When he wakes up again, the universe with the multitudinous beings comes into manifestation. This is an eternal process

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ ८

प्र-कृ-तिम् स्वाम् अवष्टभ्य वि-सृजामि पुन पुनः ।
भूत ग्रामम् इमम् कृत्स्नम् अ-वशम् प्र-कृते वशात् ॥

*prakrtim svām avastabhya visrjāmi punah-punaḥ* |
*bhūta grāmam imam krtsnam avaśam prakṛter vaśāt* ||

प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtim* Prakriti स्वाम् *svām* my own अवष्टभ्य *avaṣṭabhya* having animated विसृजामि *visrjāmi* I send forth पुन *punaḥ* again पुन *punaḥ* again भूतग्रामम् *bhūta grāmam* multitude of beings इमम् *imam* this कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnam* all अवशम् *avaśam* helpless प्रकृतेः *prakṛteḥ* of Prakriti वशात् *vaśāt* by force

**Animating My Prakriti, I send forth again and again all this multitude of beings helpless under the regime of Prakriti. 8**

The act of animating the *Prakriti* takes place on a miniature scale at all levels of our existence. Waking up in the morning all beings writhe, wriggle and twist their limbs in order to animate them. We animate the field by ploughing it. The beast is animated with a whip. The pupil is animated with

*moghāśā moghakarmāṇo moghajñānā vicetasaḥ* ।
*rākṣasīṁ āsurīṁ cai 'va prakṛtiṁ mohinīṁ śritāḥ* ॥

मोघाशाः *moghāśāḥ* of vain hopes मोघकर्माणः *mogha karmāṇaḥ* of vain actions मोघज्ञानाः *mogha jñānāḥ* of vain knowledge विचेतसः *vicetasaḥ* senseless राक्षसीम् *rākṣasīṁ* devilish आसुरीम् *āsurīṁ* undivine च *ca* and एव *eva* verily प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtiṁ* nature मोहिनीम् *mohinīṁ* deceitful श्रिताः *śritāḥ* (are) possessed of

**Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge, devoid of discrimination, partaking verily of the delusive nature of Rakshasas and Asuras.** **12**

*Mohinī prakriti* is the delusive nature which makes men believe that bodily existence is the be-all and end-all of life. The transitoriness of the mundane existence does not occur to them. Sense-indulgence is the one thing that appeals to them. Their hopes, activities and understanding are all directed to this one end. It is impossible for them to discern between the real and the unreal, between the permanent and the impermanent. Among the men of this base make up, *Rākshasās* are they in whom *rājasic* nature predominates and those others are *Asurās* in whom *tāmasic* element predominates.

**The Ways of the Devoted — 13-15**

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ १३

महा-आत्मानः तु माम् पार्थ दैवीम् प्र-कृतिम् आ-श्रि-ताः ।
भज्-अन्ति अन्-अन्य मनसः ज्ञा-त्वा भूत-आदिम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*mahātmānas tu māṁ pārtha daivīṁ prakṛtim āśritāḥ* ।
*bhajanty ananya manaso jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam* ॥

is unconcerned and unattached to her activities. The *sadhaka* in his turn has to practise unconcern and non-attachment to the duty that he discharges. And this is the means for his self-emancipation.

When egoism goes all miseries vanish along with it. When the devotee gets fixed in the conviction that whatever happens is by the will of the Lord and that he is merely an instrument in His hand, *mukti* is ensured for him in this very birth.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ १०

मया अध्यक्षेण प्र-कृतिः सू-यते स-चर-अचरम् ।
हेतुना अनेन कौन्तेय जगत् वि-परि-वर्तते ॥

*mayā 'dhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ sūyate sacarācaram* ।
*hetunā 'nena kaunteya jagad viparivartate* ॥

मया *mayā* by me अध्यक्षेण *adhyaksena* as supervisor प्रकृतिः *prakṛtiḥ* Nature सूयते *sūyate* produces सचराचरम (स चर अचरम्) *sacarācaram (sa cara acaram)* the moving and the unmoving हेतुना *hetunā* by cause अनेन *anena* by this कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya जगत् *jagat* the world विपरिवर्तते *viparivartate* revolves

**Because of My proximity, Prakriti produces all this, the moving and the unmoving; the world, therefore, revolves, O son of Kunti. 10**

The relationship between the active *Prakriti* and Iswara, the actionless stimulator thereof is rather difficult to understand. The Lord therefore takes us along with Him by the method called *Arundhati nyāya.* A subtle point is arrived at, by proceeding from the known to the less known. In the stanza seven the

prostrating च *ca* and माम् *māṁ* me भक्त्या *bhaktyā* with devotion नित्ययुक्ताः *nitya yuktāḥ* always steadfast उपासते *upāsate* worship

**Glorifying Me always, striving, firm in vows, prostrating before Me, they worship Me with devotion, ever steadfast. 14**

Mind takes the colouring of what it glorifies; by glorifying God, godly qualities come to it. Further, mind gets to know more of the field in which it strives. Venturing in divine pursuit, it imbibes the divine increasingly. Rigid vows add to self-culture. By prostrating before God, one gives oneself over to Him; and by worshipping Him with devotion one's individuality gets merged in God. Because of these varieties of ways of creating link with the Lord, the devotees thus engaged are said to be ever steadfast.

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५

ज्ञान-यज्ञेन च अपि अन्ये यजन्तः माम् उप-आसते ।
एक-त्वेन पृथक्-त्वेन बहु-धा विश्वतः-मुखम् ॥

*jñānayajñena cā 'py anye yajanto mām upāsate* ।
*ekatvena pṛthaktvena bahudhā viśvatomukham* ॥

ज्ञानयज्ञेन *jñāna yajñena* with the wisdom-sacrifice च *ca* and अपि *api* also अन्ये *anye* others यजन्तः *yajantaḥ* sacrificing माम् *māṁ* me उपासते *upāsate* worship एकत्वेन *ekatvena* as one पृथक्त्वेन *pṛthaktvena* as different बहुधा *bahudhā* in various ways विश्वतोमुखम् *viśvato mukham* the all-faced

**Fools disregard Me as one clad in human form, not knowing My higher nature as the Great Lord of beings.** **11**

The Lord who is not bound by karma is not bound by the human form also Akasa is not limited by the forms taken by the other four elements While containing all of them in itself it expands undivided into infinity The same is the case with the *Cid ākāsa* as well. It is eternally pure, wakeful and free Though this Paramatman is the common background to the entire creation, He assumes occasionally a perfect human form and seems to be enshrined in it, solely with the object of teaching humanity that it is possible for them also not to be bound by the body while residing in it Not knowing this divine play of the Lord, they treat the Incarnation also as an earth-bound one and slight Him.

The elephant has the visible tusks and the invisible set of teeth Similarly the Incarnations like Sri Krishna have the human and the Divine combined in them While appearing as the human they are the transcendental Divine, unaffected by karma and things mundane

—Sri Ramakrishna

Who are they that are not able to understand the Divinity in the Incarnation of the Lord? They are —

मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ १२

मोघ आशा मोघ-कर्माण मोघ-ज्ञाना वि-चेतस ।
राक्षसीम् आसुरीम् च एव प्रकृतिम् मोहिनीम् श्रिता ॥

Iswara is Everything — 16-19

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ १६

अहम् क्रतुः अहम् यज्ञः स्वधा अहम् अहम् औषधम् ।
मन्त्रः अहम् अहम् एव आज्यम् अहम् अग्निः अहम् हुतम् ॥

*ahaṁ kratur ahaṁ yajñaḥ svadhā 'ham aham auṣadham*
*mantro 'ham aham evā 'jyam aham agnir ahaṁ hutam*

अहम् *ahaṁ* I क्रतुः *kratuḥ* sacrifice अहम् *ahaṁ* I यज्ञः *yajñaḥ* the sacrifice स्वधा *svadhā* the offering to Pitrus or ancestors अहम् *ahaṁ* I अहम् *ahaṁ* I औषधम् *auṣadhaṁ* the medicinal herbs and all plants मन्त्रः *mantraḥ* sacred syllable अहम् *ahaṁ* I अहम् *ahaṁ* I एव *eva* also आज्यम् *ājyaṁ* ghee or clarified butter अहम् *ahaṁ* I अग्निः *agniḥ* the fire अहम् *ahaṁ* I हुतम् *hutaṁ* the offering

**I am Kratu, I am Yajna, I am Svadha, I am the medicinal herb, I am Mantra, I am also the clarified butter, I am fire, I am oblation. 16**

*Kratu* is a Vedic ritual while *Yajna* denotes Vedic and Post-Vedic forms of sacrificial worship. The offerings made to the manes is *svadhā*. The food that is medicinal and at the same time nourishing is called *aushadha*. The formative thought behind the chanted hymn is *mantra*. This stanza supplements the ideas contained in the twenty-fourth stanza of the fourth chapter. Apart from God there is no object, no thought and no act. Holding everything as He is the way to reach Him.

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥ १७

महात्मानः *mahātmānaḥ* great souls तु *tu* but माम् *mām* me पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha दैवीम् *daivīm* divine प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtim* nature आश्रिता *āśritāḥ* refuged (in) भजन्ति *bhajanti* worship अनन्यमनस *ananya manasaḥ* with a mind devoted to nothing else ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known भूतादिम् *bhūtādim* the source of beings अव्ययम् *avyayam* imperishable

**But the Mahatmans, O Partha, partaking of the divine nature, worship Me with a single mind, knowing Me as the immutable and the source of all beings. 13**

Daivī prakṛti is the divine nature which runs counter to the delusive nature mentioned in the previous stanza This is born of *sattva guna* Beings have all come from Paramatman Those who know this fact and strive to go back to Paramatman are the *Mahātmans*, the great-souled ones Self-control, love of beings, commending themselves to God— noble traits like these are evident in them

How do these great souls occupy themselves? The elucidation comes —

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४

सततम् कीर्तयन्त माम् यत्-अन्त च दृढ-व्रता ।
नमस्यन्त च माम् भक्त्या नित्य युक्ता उप-आसते ॥

*satatam kirtayanto mām yatantaś ca drdha vratāḥ* ।
*namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā nityayuktā upāsate* ॥

सततम् *satatam* always कीर्तयन्त *kīrtayantaḥ* glorifying माम् *mām* me यतन्त *yatantaḥ* striving च *ca* and दृढव्रता *dṛdha vratāḥ* firm in vows नमस्यन्त *namasyantaḥ*

Languages are all based on the science of sound. In this respect the Vedas may be said to have reached perfection. They are the sacred books which proclaim that sound is the seed from which the universe has come into being. Sound is God, *Nāda Brahman.* He persists eternally as the syllable Om, which is a blending of a+u+m. Sound originates as *a*, sustains as *u* and terminates as *ṁ*. By the Creator uttering Om once, the universe is projected, maintained and withheld. The *sadhaka* who gets fixed in the chanting of Om evolves in Godhood.

Bhagavan, Bhagavatam and the Bhaktas — these three are identical. — **Sri Ramakrishna**

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८

गम्-तिः भर्-त्ता प्रभुः साक्षी नि-वासः शरणम् सु-हृद् ।
प्र-भवः प्र-लयः स्थानम् नि-धानम् बीजम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*gatir bhartā prabhuḥ sākṣī nivāsaḥ śaraṇaṁ suhṛt*
*prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānaṁ nidhānaṁ bījam avyayam*

गतिः *gatiḥ* the goal भर्ता *bhartā* the supporter प्रभुः *prabhuḥ* the Lord साक्षी *sākṣī* the witness निवासः *nivāsaḥ* the abode शरणम् *śaraṇaṁ* the shelter सुहृत् *suhṛt* the friend प्रभवः *prabhavaḥ* the origin प्रलयः *pralayaḥ* the dissolution स्थानम् *sthānaṁ* the foundation निधानम् *nidhānaṁ* the treasure-house बीजम् *bījaṁ* the seed अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* imperishable

**I am the Goal, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Shelter, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-house and the Seed Imperishable. 18**

**Yet others sacrifice with the Yajna of knowledge and worship Me in various ways as the one, as the distinct and as the all-faced. 15**

Worshipping the Lord as the one, undivided Pure Consciousness is the way of Advaita or non-dualism.

Adoring the Almighty as the distinct is the way of Dvaita or dualism. He is held as distinct from the *Jagat* and the *Jivatman* — the universe and the beings, both of these categories being dependent on Him.

Invoking Iswara as the all-faced is the way of Visishtadvaita or the qualified non-dualism. The universe and the beings in it are all the insentient and sentient aspects of the body of the Lord. It is for this reason He is called the all-faced.

In whatever way the Lord is worshipped, it is acceptable to Him. These several ways of understanding the Lord by the devotees are all their respective *Jnana-yajnas* or sacrifices of knowledge.

Whatever be your concept of God, be it with form or formless, hold fast to it and ardently worship Him. But be not conceited that your concept alone of Him is the finale. In the course of your *sadhana* you will come to know by His grace that His attributes and forms are inexhaustible.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How can the divergent and conflicting forms of worship reach the same Lord, who is one without a second? The Lord Himself gives the answer :—

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १९

तपामि अहम् अहम् वर्षम् नि-गृह्णामि उद्-सृजामि च ।
अ-मृतम् च एव मृत्युः च सत् अ-सत् च अहम् अर्जुन ॥

*tapāmy aham ahaṁ varṣaṁ nigṛhṇāmy utsṛjāmi ca* ।
*amṛtaṁ cai 'va mṛtyuś ca sad asac cā 'ham arjuna* ॥

तपामि *tapāmi* give heat अहम् *ahaṁ* I अहम् *ahaṁ* I वर्षम् *varṣaṁ* rain निगृह्णामि *nigṛhṇāmi* withhold उत्सृजामि *utsṛjāmi* send forth च *ca* and अमृतम् *amṛtaṁ* immortality च *ca* and एव *eva* also मृत्युः *mṛtyuḥ* death च *ca* and सत् *sat* existence असत् *asat* non-existence च *ca* and अहम् *ahaṁ* I अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna

**I give heat, I withhold and send forth the rain; I am immortality and death; I am being as well as non-being, O Arjuna. 19**

As the Immanent Reality, the working of Iswara in and through the Cosmos has its glory. As the sun, the Lord gives heat and as sun-rays He is the cause of the rain commencing and ceasing. Based on the fruits of karma, the Lord is the seeming immortality of the Devas and the death of the human beings; the former is in fact, as evanescent as the latter. Both of these transitory states are helpful to train the *Jivatman* and make him fit for enlightenment. In His manifested state the Lord is the being of the Cosmos and in His unmanifested state He is the non-being. The non-being should not be construed as nihility.

The effect of the fruit-motivated action is depicted now :—

पिता ऽहम् अस्य जगतः माता धाता पितामहः ।
वेद्यम् पवित्रम् ओम्-कारः ऋक् साम यजु एव च ॥

*pitā 'ham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ* ।
*vedyaṁ pavitram aumkāra ṛk sāma yajur eva ca* ॥

पिता *pitā* father अहम् *ahaṁ* I अस्य *asya* of this जगतः *jagataḥ* world माता *mātā* mother धाता *dhātā* the dispenser of the fruits of actions पितामहः *pitāmahaḥ* grandfather वेद्यम् *vedyaṁ* the (one) thing to be known पवित्रम् *pavitraṁ* the purifier ओंकारः *oṁkāraḥ* the Omkara ऋक् *ṛk* Rik साम *sāma* Sama यजुः *yajuḥ* Yajus एव *eva* also च *ca* and

**I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the Dispenser and the Grandfather; I am the knowable, the Purifier, the syllable Om and also the Rik, the Saman and the Yajus. 17**

God being the source of the universe and the beings in it, He is held as the Father, the Mother and the Grandfather. Each individual is rewarded by the Lord according to his efforts and therefore He is the Dispenser. Knowing Iswara, everything comes to be known in its perspective; the Lord is therefore the knowable.

The elements earth, water, fire and air have the power to purify the things brought in contact with them. Man gets purified as he contacts God; God is therefore the most efficacious Purifier.

The Rik, the Saman and the Yajus deal with the origin, sustenance and end of the *Prakriti*. No mention is made here of the Atharva, the fourth Veda, as it does not come up to the level of the other three in orthodoxy.

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१

ते तम् भुज्-त्वा स्वर्ग-लोकम् विशालम् क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्य-लोकम् विश-अन्ति ।
एवम् त्रयी-धर्मम् अनु-प्र-पद्-ताः गत-आ-गतम् काम-कामाः लभ-अ-अन्ते ॥

*te tam bhuktvā svargalokam viśālam*
*kṣīṇe puṇye martyalokam viśanti* ।
*evam trayīdharmam anuprapannā*
*gatāgatam kāmakāmā labhante* ॥

ते *te* they तम् *tam* that भुक्त्वा *bhuktvā* having enjoyed स्वर्गलोकम् *svarga lokam* heaven-world विशालम् *viśālam* vast क्षीणे *kṣīṇe* at the exhaustion of पुण्ये *puṇye* (in) merit मर्त्यलोकम् *martya lokam* the world of mortals विशन्ति *viśanti* enter एवम् *evam* thus त्रयीधर्मम् *trayī dharmam* of the three Vedas अनुप्रपन्नाः *anuprapannāḥ* abiding by गतागतम् (गत अगतम्) *gatāgatam (gata agatam)* the state of going and returning कामकामाः *kāma kāmāḥ* desiring desires लभन्ते *labhante* attain

**Having enjoyed the vast world of heaven, they return to the world of mortals on the exhaustion of their merits; thus abiding by the injunctions of the three Vedas, desiring objects of desires they go and come. 21**

Just as the men of means are respected in the mortal world, the men of merits are assigned status in the celestial world. But they are not permitted to continue there after their merits run out. They are obliged to return to this world of karma again for a further acquisition of merits. As slaves to enjoyment they are forced to knock to and fro in this manner.

The goal of life varies with people. But all the divergent goals of all the people can be sorted and brought unmistakably under three classes — striving for long efficient life, seeking after wider knowledge and searching for more happiness. And these three groups are nothing but the modifications of *Sat-cit-ānanda* — Life, Light, Love. This is a comprehensive definition of God. He is therefore the direct or indirect Goal of all beings.

Because all sustenance comes from God, He is the Supporter of beings.

As the sea is the owner of the waves, Cosmic Life is the owner of the individual lives. He is therefore the Lord.

The universe and the beings appear from and disappear into Iswara; He is therefore the Witness.

Beings rest and reside in the Cosmic Consciousness even as the cinema pictures get themselves expressed on a screen. The Lord is therefore the Abode.

He is the only lasting Shelter to those who want to be freed from the clutches of the cold hand of death.

The Lord is the one fast Friend residing in the hearts of the good and the bad in the form of Conscience and directing them on the right way.

What the ocean is to the wave, the Lord is to the entire Creation. He is therefore the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-house and the Seed Imperishable.

does not take place. In every respect the spirituality of the spiritual man is promoted.

It is *ananyabhakti* when the love of the *Jivatman* for the Paramatman takes away all distinctions between the two.

*Yoga* in the context of this stanza means the provision of the means required for the devotees' bodily maintenance; and *kshema* means the protection of what has been provided.

The baby in the womb gets its nourishment from the mother because of the state of non-separation between the two. The boon of *ananyabhakti* is even greater and more consequential than this. While the mother and the baby will be separated by time, this *Jivatman* and Paramatman will become united for eternity. The grace of the Lord unfailingly facilitates this union. While the seekers of heaven chase the phantom, the genuine devotee of the Lord gains Him, the Incomparable.

> When the devotee takes one stride towards the Lord, He takes ten strides towards that devotee. Such is His grace.
>
> —Sri Ramakrishna

But will not the homage paid to the minor deities become the worship of the Lord? The clarification comes :—

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ २३

ये अपि अन्य-देवताः भक्ताः यजन्ते श्रद्धया अनु-इ-ताः ।
ते अपि माम् एव कौन्तेय यजन्ति अ-विधि-पूर्वकम् ॥

The Way of the Enjoyment seekers — 20 21

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकमश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ २०

त्रैविद्या' माम् सोम-पा पूत-पापा यज्ञै इष्ट्वा स्व -गतिम् प्र-अर्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यम् आसाद्य सुर-इन्द्र लोकम् अश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देव भोगान् ॥

*traividyā mām somapāḥ pūtapāpā*
*yajñair iṣṭvā svargatim prārthayante* ।
*te puṇyam āsādya surendralokam*
*aśnanti divyān divi devabhogān* ॥

त्रैविद्या *trai vidyāḥ* the knowers of the three Vedas माम् *mām* me सोमपा *somapāḥ* the drinkers of Soma पूतपापा *pūta pāpāḥ* purified from sin यज्ञै *yajñaiḥ* by sacrifices इष्ट्वा *iṣṭvā* worshipping स्वर्गतिम् *svargatim* way to heaven प्रार्थयन्ते *prārthayante* pray ते *te* they पुण्यम् *puṇyam* holy आसाद्य *āsādya* having reached सुरेन्द्रलोकम् *surendra lokam* the world of the lord of gods अश्नन्ति *aśnanti* eat (enjoy) दिव्यान् *divyān* divine दिवि *divi* in heaven देवभोगान् *deva bhogān* the divine pleasures

**The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, purified from sin, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven. They reach the holy world of the Lord of the Devas and enjoy in heaven the celestial pleasures of Devas. 20**

What is mentioned here is the foremost among the heavenly enjoyments to which the three Vedas — the Rik, the Saman and the Yajus — show the path Indra is the title of the Lord of the Devas This status comes to the one who successfully performs a hundred fruit-motivated *yajñās*.

But why should this method be held wrong at all? The explanation comes :—

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥ २४

अहम् हि सर्व-यज्ञानाम् भोक्ता च प्रभुः एव च ।
न तु माम् अभि-जा-नन्ति तद्-त्वेन अतः च्यवन्ति ते ॥

*aham hi sarvayajñānām bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca ।*
*na tu mām abhijānanti tattvenā 'taś cyavanti te ॥*

अहम् *aham* I हि *hi* verily सर्वयज्ञानाम् *sarva yajñānām* of all sacrifices भोक्ता *bhoktā* enjoyer च *ca* and प्रभुः *prabhuḥ* lord एव *eva* alone च *ca* and न *na* not तु *tu* but माम् *mām* me अभिजानन्ति *abhijānanti* know तत्त्वेन *tattvena* in reality अतः *ataḥ* hence च्यवन्ति *cyavanti* fall ते *te* they

**I am verily the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Yajnas. But these men do not know Me in reality; hence they fall. 24**

The same food when fed by the nurse has one effect on the body and mind of the baby and quite another effect when fed by the mother. There is no substitute in the world for mother's love; and this makes a world of difference in the build of the baby. The love of Iswara is the love of the mother and much more too.

The minor gods give their votaries things impermanent and entangle them more in the wheel of birth and death; hence they fall. The effect of the worship of Iswara is different. While granting the devotees the things of the world they pray for, He

But what about those who have outgrown all desires and have completely made themselves over to the Maker? Their position is explained :—

Man Gets What He Seeks—22-25

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ २२

अन्-अन्याः चिन्त्-अय-अन्तः माम् ये जनाः परि-उप-आस्-अते ।
तेषाम् नित्य-अभि-युज्-तानाम् योग-क्षेमम् वहामि अहम् ॥

*ananyāś cintayanto māṁ ye janāḥ paryupāsate* ।
*teṣām nityābhiyuktānāṁ yogakṣemaṁ vahāmy aham* ॥

अनन्याः *ananyāḥ* without others चिन्तयन्तः *cintayantaḥ* thinking माम् *māṁ* me ये *ye* who जनाः *janāḥ* men पर्युपासते (परि उपासते) *paryupāsate (pari upāsate)* worship तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* of them नित्याभियुक्तानाम् (नित्य अभियुक्तानाम्) *nityābhiyuktānāṁ (nitya abhiyuktānām)* of the ever-united योगक्षेमम् *yoga kṣemaṁ* the supply of what is not already possessed, and the preservation of what is already possessed वहामि *vahāmi* carry अहम् *ahaṁ* I

**To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, who are ever devout, I provide gain and security. 22**

This is a sublime statement revealing the law of life at the spiritual level. In the economy of nature the distribution of labour is benignly meted out. It is all right for the body-bound man to toil for food and clothing. But he who has completely attuned himself to the Divine loses in calibre when he brings his mind down to the mundane level. The grace of the Lord works in such a way that this downfall

mind of man rises to the level of the deity whom he adores. The *sadhaka* should therefore be able to distinguish between the minor deities at various cosmic levels and Iswara, the Ultimate Reality.

The Devas are more evolved than men. Their span of embodied life being great, they are called the immortals; but they are also subject to birth and death. By worshipping them men may gain longevity and supernatural powers which are all hindrances to *bhakti*, *jnana* and *mukti*.

The *Pitrus* are the manes who form a region of their own. Sending holy thoughts for the welfare of the departed ancestors is good; but drifting into ancestor-worship is not desirable. Priestcraft usually encourages this weakness and credulity in man. The ancestors necessarily get changed with every new birth that man takes. Undue concern therefore for *Pitrus* is purposeless and detrimental to spiritual growth; it only adds to earthly attachment and bondage.

The *Bhūtās* are, in the scale of evolution, intermediate between men and Devas. By worshipping them the votaries may at best get some psychic power, leading to vanity and greater bondage to mundane life.

It is the worship of Iswara, the Supreme Reality, that is beneficial. It leads to prosperity, perfection and emancipation.

A dyer once had a unique method of colouring clothes. He had a solitary dye tub into which he would dip the cloths brought in by the customers and give whatever colour they wanted. Red, yellow, blue, green, purple — all these and more colours were produced from the same tub. An intelligent

*ye 'py anyadevatā bhaktā yajante śraddhayā 'nvitāḥ ।*
*te 'pi mām eva kaunteya yajanty avidhipūrvakam ॥*

ये *ye* who अपि *api* even अन्यदेवताः *anya devatāḥ* other gods भक्ताः *bhaktāḥ* devotees यजन्ते *yajante* worship श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith अन्विताः *anvitāḥ* endowed ते *te* they अपि *api* also माम् *mām* me एव *eva* alone कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya यजन्ति *yajanti* worship अविधिपूर्वकम् *avidhi pūrvakaṁ* by the wrong method

**Even those devotees who, endowed with Sraddha, worship other gods, worship Me alone, O son of Kunti, by the wrong method. 23**

Because these are devotees endowed with *sraddha*, they are necessarily believers in God and in His grace. It is not wantonly, but only for want of right understanding that they adopt the wrong method.

A good government has its sound administrative system from which its loyal officers do not deviate. Be it supposed that a citizen has applied to an officer for a favour and he has sanctioned it, coming as it does within the purview of the system. It is a mistake if the applicant fancies that the officer has shown him a concession. The actual position of the minor gods is equal to that of the government officers. As all powers come to them from the government, even so whatever power the other gods have, it has come to them from Iswara. Apart from and independent of Him no deity has any power to bestow any boon. The wrong method consists in getting the things done counter to this truth.

Metaphysical understanding and material abundance are of no avail to gain access to the Lord. It is pure devotion to which the Lord submits Himself. He who has *Bhakti* gains Bhagavan easily. A leaf and such like things are mere tokens of love.

The gruel offered by Vidura was accepted with pleasure by Sri Krishna. The flattened dry rice hesitatingly brought by Sudama was pulled out from him and partaken of with relish by Krishna. The dried fruits offered by Sabari were graciously accepted and eaten by Sri Rama. Lord Siva accepted the tongue-tainted venison and mouthful of water offered by the hunter Kannappa. *Bhakti* is all-in-all to the Lord.

What should the devotee do then? The Lord tells :—

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ २७

यत् करोषि यत् अश्-नासि यत् जुहोषि ददा-सि यत् ।
यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत् कुरु-स्व मद्-अर्पणम् ॥

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat* ।
*yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam* ॥

यत् *yat* whatever करोषि *karoṣi* thou doest यत् *yat* whatever अश्नासि *aśnāsi* thou eatest यत् *yat* whatever जुहोषि *juhoṣi* thou offcrest in sacrifice ददासि *dadāsi* thou givest यत् *yat* whatever यत् *yat* whatever तपस्यसि *tapasyasi* thou practiseth as austerity कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya तत् *tat* that कुरुष्व *kuruṣva* do मदर्पणम् *mad arpanaṁ* offering unto me

inculcates in them increased *Bhakti* and *Jnana* which prepare them for *Mukti* This power is exclusively with Iswara. He is therefore the Enjoyer and the Lord of all *Yajnas*. It is incumbent on the *sadhaka* to understand this truth and devote himself exclusively to the worship of Iswara.

The Lord's statement "I alone am the *Adhiyajna* here in this body", in Chapter eight stanza four requires to be taken note of.

The relative destinies of the varying votaries are as follows :—

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितॄन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५

या-अन्ति देव-व्रताः देवान् पितॄन् या-अन्ति पितृ-व्रताः ।
भू-तानि यान्ति भू-त-इज्याः यान्ति मद्-याजिनः अपि माम् ॥

*yānti devavratā devān pitṝn yānti pitṛvratāḥ* ।
*bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā yānti madyājino 'pi mām* ॥

यान्ति *yānti* go देवव्रताः *deva vratāḥ* worshippers of the Devas देवान् *devān* to the Devas पितॄन् *pitṝn* to the Pitrus or ancestors यान्ति *yānti* go पितृव्रताः *pitṛ vratāḥ* worshippers of the Pitrus भूतानि *bhūtāni* to the Bhutas यान्ति *yānti* go भूतेज्याः *bhūtejyāḥ* the worshippers of the Bhutas यान्ति *yānti* go मद्याजिनः *madyājinaḥ* my worshippers अपि *api* also माम् *mām* to me

**Votaries of the Devas go to the Devas; the votaries of the Pitrus go to the Pitrus; to the Bhutas go the Bhuta worshippers; My votaries come to Me.**

The water in the pipe can rise to the level in the reservoir to which it is connected. Likewise the

be freed कर्मबन्धनैः *karma bandhanaiḥ* from the bonds of actions संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा *saṁnyāsa yoga yuktātmā* with the mind steadfast in the yoga of renunciation विमुक्तः *vimuktaḥ* liberated माम् *māṁ* to me उपैष्यसि *upaiṣyasi* (thou) shalt come

**Thus shall you be free from the bondage of actions yielding good and bad results. With the mind firmly set in the yoga of renunciation and liberated, you shall come to Me. 28**

The good and bad results of karma contribute for the continuity of the cycle of births. But when they are all offered to the Lord, they become as ineffective as the burnt up seeds, unable to sprout any further. The yogi is in this way freed from bondage.

The conflict between engaging oneself in action and emerging from it gets reconciled in *sanyāsa yoga.* All selfishness is renounced; that way it is *sanyāsa.* Work is vigorously done for the sake of the Lord; that way it is yoga. Such a yogi is a *Jīvan-mukta* while yet in body; he becomes a *videha mukta* when he drops his body.

What should you do when you are in this world? You should dedicate your everything to Iswara. You take refuge in Him. Then you will have no misery whatsoever. You will forthwith get to the Lord.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The way of the world is to commingle with those drawn together and to be indifferent to the others. Is not Iswara also behaving like the worldly? His real position is herein explained :—

customer who watched these miracles entrusted his cloth to the dyer and requested him to dye it as he liked.

Our mind is the cloth. Iswara is the dyer and dyeing tub. He gives us what we pray for. The best that we can do is not to ask Him for anything but give ourselves over to Him. He in His turn gives Himself to us.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Access to the minor gods is rather easy; but access to Iswara is not so easy. An idea to this effect may rise in the minds of people. But the Lord clarifies this position :—

### Worship of Iswara is the Easiest — 26-28

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६

पत्रम् पुष्पम् फलम् तोयम् यः मे भज्-त्या प्र-यच्छति ।
तत् अहम् भक्ति-उप-हृतम् अश्-ना-मि प्र-यम्-त-आत्मनः ॥

*patraṁ puspam phalaṁ toyaṁ*
*yo me bhaktyā prayacchati* ।
*tad ahaṁ bhakty upahṛtam*
*asnāmi prayatātmanaḥ* ॥

पत्रम् *patraṁ* a leaf पुष्पम् *puṣpaṁ* a flower फलम् *phalaṁ* fruit तोयम् *toyaṁ* water यः *yaḥ* who मे *me* to me भक्त्या *bhaktyā* with devotion प्रयच्छति *prayacchati* offers तत् *tat* that अहम् *ahaṁ* I भक्त्युपहृतम् (भक्ति उपहृतम्) *bhaktyupahṛtaṁ (bhakti upahṛtaṁ)* offered with devotion अश्नामि *asnāmi* eat (accept) प्रयतात्मनः (प्रयत आत्मनः) *prayatātmanaḥ (prayata ātmanaḥ)* by the pure-minded

**Whoever offers Me with devotion, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I accept that, the pious offering of the pure in heart. 26**

The greatness of *Bhakti* is now expounded:—

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥ ३०

अपि चेत् सु दुर्-आ-चारः भज्-अते माम् अन्-अन्य-भाक् ।
साधुः एव सः मन्-तव्यः सम्यक् वि-अव-सितः हि सः ॥

*api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananyabhāk* ।
*sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ* ॥

अपि *api* even चेत् *cet* if सुदुराचारः *sudurācāraḥ* a very wicked person भजते *bhajate* worships माम् *mām* me अनन्यभाक् *ananyabhāk* with devotion to none else साधुः *sādhuḥ* righteous एव *eva* verily सः *saḥ* he मन्तव्यः *mantavyaḥ* should be regarded सम्यक् *samyak* rightly व्यवसितः *vyavasitaḥ* resolved हि *hi* indeed सः *saḥ* he

**Even if a man of the most sinful conduct worships Me with undeviating devotion, he must be reckoned as righteous, for he has rightly resolved. 30**

The dirtiest water can be brought back to its original pure state through distillation. Even while in dirt its innate element is not lost. Man's case is much more definite than that of water. There is no such thing as eternal damnation to the sinner as some religions would have it. The unpardonable sin is a misnomer. Salvation of mankind is the supreme plan of the Divine. The more man turns to God the purer he becomes. His mind gets automatically set aright in God-thought. His good action then follows in the trail of his purified thought. He emerges as one reclaimed in virtue.

How to wean people from worldliness to godliness, thought the twin saints — Nityananda and Gouranga. They struck upon

**Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you gift away, whatever austerity you practise, O Kaunteya, do it as an offering to Me. 27**

The panacea for all the evils of earthly life is presented here. To change the secular into the sacred is the only way to metamorphose the human into the divine. Self-seeking ought to give place to self-denial. Making gift is often for self-advertisement. Practising austerity with self-interest may bring in spiritual vanity. But when all these good deeds are done for the glory of the Lord, the doer emerges as the divine. The turning point in life comes in dedicating man's everything to God, instead of petitioning to Him for things here and hereafter.

"O Mother, I am an instrument, You are its manipulator. I am the house; You are the resident. I am the chariot and You the charioteer. I move as You make me move. I speak as You direct. My doings are all Your doings. Not I; not I; but You."

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The good that accrues from surrendering everything to God is reckoned thus :—

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ २८

शुभ-अ-शुभ-फलैः एवम् मोक्ष्-स्यसे कर्मन्-बन्धनैः ।
सम्-नि-आस-योग-युज्-त-आत्मा वि-मुच्-तः माम् उप-इ-स्यसि ॥

*śubhāśubhaphalair evaṁ moksyase karmabandhanaiḥ* ।
*saṁnyāsa yoga yuktātmā vimukto māṁ upaiṣyasi* ॥

शुभ अशुभ फलैः *subha asubha phalaiḥ* from good and evil fruits एवम् *evaṁ* thus मोक्ष्यसे *mokṣyase* (thou) shalt

The Pandava brothers themselves bear testimony to the fact that the devotees of the Lord never get lost. All the five of them had unflinching devotion to Sri Krishna. They lost their empire; they were exposed to many dangers; untold trials and tribulations came upon them; the life of long exile in the forest was painful. But they did not falter in their faith in God. Adversity only increased their love of the Lord. They were blessed in the end with *sreyas*, the best in life.

The case of the mediocre is now taken into account :—

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥ ३२

माम् हि पार्थ वि-अप-आ-श्रित्य ये अपि स्युः पाप-योनयः ।
स्त्रियः वैश्याः तथा शूद्राः ते अपि या-अन्ति पराम् गम्-तिम् ॥

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya ye 'pi syuḥ pāpayonayaḥ* ।
*striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te 'pi yānti parām gatim* ॥

माम् *mām* me हि *hi* indeed पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha व्यपाश्रित्य *vyapāśritya* taking refuge in ये *ye* who अपि *api* even स्युः *syuḥ* may be पापयोनयः *pāpayonayaḥ* of mediocre birth स्त्रियः *striyaḥ* women वैश्याः *vaiśyāḥ* Vaisyas तथा *tathā* also शूद्राः *śūdrāḥ* Sudras ते *te* they अपि *api* also यान्ति *yānti* attain पराम् *parām* the supreme गतिम् *gatim* goal

**For those who take refuge in Me, O Partha, though they be of inferior birth — women, Vaisyas and Sudras — even they attain the Supreme Goal. 32**

पापयोनि - *pāpa yoni* ought not to be misconstrued as sinful birth or wicked birth. It simply means

### The Neutral Iswara is the Votary's Own — 29 34

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥ २९

सम अहम् सर्व-भूतेषु न मे द्विष्. अस्-ति न प्रिय ।
ये भज्-अन्ति तु माम् भज् त्या मयि ते तेषु च अपि अहम् ॥

*samo 'ham sarvabhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ* ।
*ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cā 'py aham* ॥

सम *samaḥ* the same अहम् *aham* I सर्वभूतेषु *sarva bhūteṣu* in all beings न *na* not मे *me* to me द्वेष्य *dveṣyaḥ* hateful अस्ति *asti* is न *na* not प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear ये *ye* who भजन्ति *bhajanti* worship तु *tu* but माम् *mām* me भक्त्या *bhaktyā* with devotion मयि *mayi* in me ते *te* they तेषु *teṣu* in them च *ca* and अपि *api* also अहम् *aham* I

**I am the same to all beings; to Me there is none hateful, none dear. But those who worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I also am in them. 29**

The sunlight falls equally on all things, good and bad, but its effect and utilization vary according to the nature of those things The very presence of the sun is seen in a mirror because of its fitness Though the all-pervading Lord is in the hearts of all, His presence is patent only in the pure heart of the devotee. As one gives oneself to God, one gets purified and God's presence in that one becomes evident

God is in all beings but all beings are not in God And that is the cause of their suffering

— Sri Ramakrishna

*lokaṁ* world इमम् *imaṁ* this प्राप्य *prāpya* having obtained भजस्व *bhajasva* worship माम् *māṁ* me

**How much more then the holy Brahmanas and devoted royal saints! Having come into this transient, joyless world, do worship Me. 33**

*Punyam* is in contrast with *pāpam* already mentioned. A Brahmana is one who is perfect in mind and completely given over to spiritual life. The Kshatriya comes next to him and he is also entirely devoted to God. These two types of highly evolved people can easily attain Godhood.

What is sought as a fragrant and fresh flower today is cast aside as rubbish tomorrow. This is the case with everything in the world. Its transitoriness is self-evident. Misery is the counterpart of every earthly joy. Sorrow is ingrained in happiness. The highly evolved souls, the discerning ones should therefore take to the worship of Iswara so that they may transcend this relative existence.

How shall we attain the Lord?

Can you with a distressed heart pray to Him for His grace and revelation? You shed pots full of tears for the sake of your wife, children and property. Have you ever shed a drop of tear seeking the Lord? As long as the baby is interested in toys, the mother minds her own business. But when the baby throws away those things and screams, the mother rushes to attend on it. You behave likewise towards God; and He will reveal Himself to you.

—Sri Ramakrishna

the plan of preaching that the chanting of the Lord's name would bring in to them more of wealth and earthly enjoyments. Attracted by the offer, people in large numbers joined the saints in singing and chanting the glory of God. The divine ecstasy that emanated from that holy act made people forget all vulgar pleasures and turn their minds more Godward. God is the divine talisman for all worldly evils

— Sri Ramakrishna

How long does the convert take to reach Godhood? The answer comes :—

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ ३१

क्षिप्रम् भवति धर्म-आत्मा शश्वत् शान्तिम् नि-गच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रति-जा-नीहि न मे भक्त. प्र-नश्यति ॥

*kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā śaśvacchāntim nigacchati* ।
*kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati* ॥

क्षिप्रम् *kṣipram* soon भवति *bhavati* (he) becomes धर्मात्मा *dharmātmā* righteous शश्वत् *śaśvat* eternal शान्तिम् *śāntim* peace निगच्छति *nigacchati* attains to कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O son of Kunti प्रतिजानीहि *pratijānīhi* know न *na* not मे *me* my भक्त· *bhaktaḥ* Bhakta प्रणश्यति *praṇaśyati* is destroyed

**Soon does he become a man of righteousness and obtains lasting peace. O Kaunteya, know for certain that My devotee never perishes. 31**

Many a sinner has within the span of a single life-time after conversion changed into the divine. The oldest case known to us is that of the sage Valmiki. An illustrious recent convert is Girish Chandra Ghose who after contacting Sri Ramakrishna changed quickly from profligacy to purity.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगो नाम
नवमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde rājavidyā rājaguhya yogo nāma navamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the ninth discourse designated :

THE YOGA OF SOVEREIGN SCIENCE AND SOVEREIGN SECRET

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imperfect birth, quite common in Nature. It may be found that in all species the feminine body is less perfect and less majestic than the masculine. And in the human, the mind is more important than the physique. Women as a class are less developed in mind than men, though exceptions may be found. They only are classified as Vaisyas and Sudras who are not fully developed in mind. The inferior birth, therefore, is a statement of fact. Even the mediocre mentioned herein are competent to reach Godhood. No human being is debarred from this birthright.

When there is a hurricane, it is not possible to distinguish one tree from another. Similarly when there is the hurricane of *bhakti* in the mind, distinctions such as sex, caste, colour and race vanish of their own accord.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

How about the fully qualified ones? The answer comes :—

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ ३३

किम् पुनः ब्राह्मणा पुण्याः भक्-ताः राज-ऋषय. तथा ।
अ-नित्यम् अ-सुखम् लोकम् इमम् प्र-आप्-य भज-स्व-माम् ॥

*kim punar brāhmanāḥ puṇyā bhaktā rājarṣayas tathā* ।
*anityam asukham lokam imam prāpya bhajasva mām* ॥

किं पुनः *kim punaḥ* how much more ब्राह्मणाः *brāhmaṇāḥ* Brahmanas पुण्या. *punyāh* holy भक्ताः *bhaktāḥ* devoted राजर्षयः *rājarsayaḥ* royal saints तथा *tathā* also अनित्यम् *anityam* impermanent असुखम् *asukham* unhappy लोकम्

of the taught. This psychological fact is made evident here. The Vedantic verdict — "Wonderful is the teacher, and equally clever the pupil" is more than proved by Sri Krishna and Arjuna. What the Lord imparts is the life-saving ambrosia to Arjuna.

The topic dealt with in chapters seven and nine is resumed and supplemented somewhat elaborately in this chapter. Repeated and comprehensive enquiry into the glory of the Lord clarifies the understanding and promotes devotion. For, knowing and loving are interrelated. What else can man do than bend his head in reverence before the Grandeur and Sublimity of the Lord!

But what grandeur can there be in a personality bound in this mortal coil? The Lord Himself answers :—

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥ २

न मे विदुः सुर-गणाः प्र-भवम् न महत्-ऋषयः ।
अहम् आदिः हि देवानाम् महत्-ऋषीणाम् च सर्वशः ॥

*na me viduḥ suragaṇāḥ prabhavaṁ na maharṣayaḥ* |
*aham ādir hi devānāṁ maharṣīṇāṁ ca sarvaśaḥ* ||

न *na* not मे *me* my विदुः *viduḥ* know सुरगणाः *suragaṇāḥ* the hosts of Devas प्रभवम् *prabhavaṁ* origin न *na* not महर्षयः *maharṣayaḥ* the great Rishis अहम् *ahaṁ* I आदिः *ādiḥ* the beginning हि *hi* for देवानाम् *devānāṁ* of the Devas महर्षीणाम् *maharṣīṇāṁ* of the great Rishis च *ca* and सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* in every way

How to pray to God? It is made clear.—

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥ ३४

मद्-मना भव मद्-भक्त मद्-याजी माम् नमस्-कुरु ।
माम् एव ए स्यसि युज् त्वा एवम् आत्मानम् मद्-पर-अयन ॥

*manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru* ।
*mām evai 'syasi yuktvai 'vam ātmānam matparāyaṇaḥ* ॥

मन्मनाः *manmanāḥ* with mind filled with me भव *bhava* be thou मद्भक्त *mad bhaktaḥ* my devotee मद्याजी *madyājī* sacrificer माम् *mām* unto me नमस्कुरु *namaskuru* bow down माम् *mām* to me एव *eva* alone एष्यसि *esyasi* thou shalt come युक्त्वा *yuktvā* having united एवम् *evam* thus आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self मत्परायण *matparāyaṇaḥ* taking me as the supreme goal

**Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice unto Me; bow down to Me. Having thus made yourself steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme Goal, you will come to Me. 34**

A selfish man resorts to God to have his desires fulfilled and his individuality preserved But the injunction of the Lord to the discerning devotee is different The *sadhaka* is not to practise escape-mentality nor is he to develop quietism On the other hand his talents have all to be harnessed to make life a fulfilment In dedicating himself and his service to the Divine he gets himself utilized to the maximum. As the river gives itself to the ocean and becomes one with it, the devotee gives himself to the Lord and becomes one with Him.

*yo mām ajam anādiṁ ca vetti lokamaheśvaram |*
*asaṁmūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate ||*

यः *yaḥ* who माम् *māṁ* me अजम् *ajaṁ* unborn अनादिम् *anādiṁ* beginningless च *ca* and वेत्ति *vetti* knows लोक महेश्वरम् *loka maheśvaraṁ* the great lord of the worlds असंमूढः *asaṁmūḍhaḥ* undeluded सः *saḥ* he मर्त्येषु *martyeṣu* amongst mortals सर्वपापैः *sarva pāpaiḥ* from all sins प्रमुच्यते *pramucyate* is liberated

**He who knows Me as unborn and beginningless, as the Great Lord of the worlds, he among mortals is undeluded and freed from all sins.** 3

In His Absolute State, Brahman is unknown and unknowable. *Triputi* or the triad of the seer, the seen and the process of seeing is not in Him. But in His Transcendent State, a glimpse of His Reality is intuited by the perfected ones like the Rishis. They realize the existence of the Imperishable as the basis of the perishing *Prakriti*. This contact is like the looking at the infinite sky through a peep-hole. But this realization is very important to a *sadhaka*. He intuits that the Lord is unborn and beginningless and that He is the Supreme Sovereign of the worlds. After knowing this truth he is no more deluded about the functioning of the phenomenon. Sin consists of construing man's life as independent of Iswara's ordainment. But the *sadhaka* who links his life entirely with the plan and purpose of the Lord, gets himself freed from all sins.

To see into the way of the Transcendent Reality is given to the Enlightened only. But Brahman filters Himself down further into Immanence. In

# विभूतियोगः

## VIBHUTI YOGA—THE YOGA OF DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS

## CHAPTER X

Iswara the Source of Everything — The Knowledge of Vibhuti fosters Devotion—The Buddhi yoga — Bliss Evident in God's Glories — The Vibhutis Defined—The Essence of the Vibhutis

### Iswara the Source of Everything — 1 6

श्री भगवानुवाच

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ १

भूयः एव महत्-बाहो शृणु मे परमम् वच. ।
यत् ते अहम् प्री-यमाणाय वच्-स्यामि हित-काम्यया ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*bhūya eva mahābāho śrnu me paramam vacaḥ* ।
*yat te 'ham prīyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi hitakāmyayā* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again एव *eva* verily महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed शृणु *śṛnu* hear मे *me* my परमम् *paramam* supreme वचः *vacaḥ* word यत् *yat* which ते *te* to thee अहम् *aham* I प्रीयमाणाय *prīyamānāya* who art beloved वक्ष्यामि *vakṣyāmi* (I) will declare हितकाम्यया *hitakāmyayā* wishing (thy) welfare

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Once again, O mighty-armed, listen to My supreme word. Out of a desire to do you good I wish to speak of it to your absorbing delight. 1**

The Lord is pleased with Arjuna's keen interest in hearing of His divine glories. The master's zeal to teach waxes in unison with the receptive faculty

*Damaḥ* or self-restraint is the control of the external senses of touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing.

*Samaḥ* or calmness is the practice of the quietude of the mind and intellect.

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥ ५

अ-हिंसा सम-ता तुष्-तिः तपः दानम् यशः अ-यशः ।
भव-अन्ति भावाः भूतानाम् मद्-तः एव पृथक् विधाः ॥

*ahiṁsā samatā tuṣṭis tapo dānaṁ yaśo 'yaśaḥ* ।
*bhavanti bhāvā bhūtānāṁ matta eva pṛthagvidhāḥ* ॥

अहिंसा *ahiṁsā* non-injury समता *samatā* equanimity तुष्टिः *tuṣṭiḥ* contentment तपः *tapaḥ* austerity दानम् *dānaṁ* beneficence यशः *yaśaḥ* fame अयशः *ayaśaḥ* ill-fame भवन्ति *bhavanti* arise भावाः *bhāvāḥ* qualities भूतानाम् *bhūtānāṁ* of beings मत्तः *mattaḥ* from me एव *eva* alone पृथग्विधाः *pṛthagvidhāḥ* of different kinds

**Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and obloquy—these different qualities of beings arise from Me alone.** 5

*Samatā* or equanimity is the balanced state of the mind in the midst of the happenings of the desirable and undesirable occurrences.

*Tapas* or austerity is the determined change of life-habits from bad to good through a rigorous self-discipline.

*Dānam* or charity is the gift of the good and useful things made to the deserving persons.

Neither the hosts of Devas nor the great Rishis know My origin; for in every respect I am the source of the Devas and the great Rishis. 2

The birth of the son and his progress in life is known to the father, but the birth and boyhood of the father ever remains beyond the ken of the son. Analogously Brahman is the Source and Witness of the universe that comes from Him and merges into Him. This Eternal Brahman is to some extent cognized by the perfected beings like the great Rishis. But His glory in its entirety can never be known by the hosts of saints and sages. He only remains partially revealed even when He embodies as an Incarnation like Rama or Krishna.

The divine breeze blowing from the ocean of *Sat-cit-ananda Brahman* transports people into ecstasy. Sanaka, Sanantana and other ancient Rishis got themselves perfected by this divine breeze. A mere glimpse of this ocean sent Narada into raptures Suka the born *Brahma-Jnani* touched this water but once and got himself filled with *Brahmavastha* and wandered the world as a divine lad. Siva the Cosmic Teacher took only three sips from this Great Ocean and became dazed with transcendental Bliss Indeed, who can measure the depth or the characteristics of the Infinite Ocean of Brahman

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How then does Brahman serve us, the ordinary aspirants? The clarification comes :—

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३

य. माम् अ-जम् अन्-आदिम् च वेद्-ति लोक-महा-ईश्वरम् ।
अ-सं-मुह्-त सः मर्त्येषु सर्व-पापैः प्र मुच्-यते ॥

ancient Manus are Svarochisha, Svayambhu, Raivata and Uttama. These potentates are not of human origin. They are all born of the mind of Brahma, the Creator. In other words, they are all personifications of the several phases of the Cosmic Reality. The seven great Rishis represent the seven planes of consciousness. They are therefore said to be the originators of beings at all levels of existence and all grades of evolution. Naught exists beyond the pale of their domains. While the seven Rishis represent the created beings in their entirety, the four ancient Manus function as the orderly administrators of the entire Creation. The precision and regularity evinced by Nature are all due to the efficient regime of the Manus.

What is the benefit that the *sadhaka* derives by knowing this structure of the Cosmos and of its orderly functioning? The answer comes :—

**The Knowledge of Vibhuti fosters Devotion—7-9**

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ ७

एताम् वि-भूतिम् योगम् च मम यः वेत्ति तद्-त्वतः ।
सः अ-वि-कम्पेन योगेन युज्-यते न अत्र संशयः ॥

*etāṁ vibhūtiṁ yogaṁ ca mama yo vetti tattvataḥ* ।
*so 'vikampena yogena yujyate nā 'tra saṁśayaḥ* ॥

एताम् *etāṁ* these विभूतिम् *vibhūtiṁ* manifold manifestations of my being योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga power च *ca* and मम *mama* mine यः *yaḥ* who वेत्ति *vetti* knows तत्त्वतः *tattvataḥ* in truth सः *saḥ* he अविकम्पेन *avikampena* unshakable योगेन *yogena* in yoga युज्यते *yujyate* becomes

this aspect of His, He is available to the ordinary *sadhakas* too. This is being described now :—

बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥ ४

बुध्-तिः ज्ञा-नम् अ-सम्-मोहः क्षमा सत्यम् दमः शमः ।
सुखम् दुःखम् भवः अ-भावः भयम् च अ-भयम् एव च ॥

*buddhir jñānam asaṁmohaḥ*
*kṣamā satyaṁ damaḥ śamaḥ* ।
*sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ bhavo 'bhāvo*
*bhayaṁ cā 'bhayam eva ca* ॥

बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* wisdom असंमोहः *asaṁmohaḥ* non-illusion क्षमा *ksamā* forgiveness सत्यम् *satyaṁ* truth दमः *damaḥ* self-restraint शमः *śamaḥ* calmness सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness दुःखम् *duḥkhaṁ* pain भवः *bhavaḥ* birth अभावः *abhāvaḥ* non-existence भयम् *bhayaṁ* fear च *ca* and अभयम् *abhayaṁ* fearlessness एव *eva* even च *ca* and

**Intellect, wisdom, non-delusion, patience, truth, self-restraint, calmness, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fear and fearlessness. 4**

*Buddhi* or intellect is the faculty of grasping matters subtle and abstruse. *Jnanam* or wisdom is the discernment of Atman.

*Asaṁmohaḥ* or non-delusion is the clarity of the mind even in critical and trying situations.

*Kshamā* or patience is the kindly attitude of the mind even towards opponents and enemies.

*Satyam* or truth is the accurate presentation of what one has seen, known and experienced.

understanding भजन्ते *bhajante* worship माम् *māṁ*. me बुधाः *budhāḥ* the wise भावसमन्विताः *bhāvasamanvitāḥ* endowed with meditation

**I am the origin of all; from Me all things evolve. The wise know this and adore Me with all their heart.**

The farmer who wants to bring up robust plants gives all his attention to the soil, it being the basis of good cultivation. The wise in this wise give their mind to God knowing that He is the source of everything and that the thought of Him alone enriches and ennobles the mind. Their attention does not on any account deviate from God. As the plant gets itself rooted in the earth, the yogi gets himself attached to the Almighty. And that is the unfaltering yoga.

Is there then no provision for the varying temperaments to be drawn Godward? The answer is given :—

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥ ९

मद्-चित्ताः मद्-गत-प्राणाः बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथ्-अयन्तः च माम् नित्यम् तुष्-यन्ति च रम्-अन्ति च ॥

*maccittā madgataprāṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam* ।
*kathayantaś ca māṁ nityaṁ tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca* ॥

मच्चित्ताः *maccittāḥ* with their minds wholly in me मद्गतप्राणाः *madgata prāṇāḥ* with their life absorbed in me बोधयन्तः *bodhayantaḥ* enlightening परस्परम् *parasparaṁ* mutually कथयन्तः *kathayantaḥ* speaking of च *ca*

*Yasaḥ* and *Ayasaḥ* or fame and obloquy are the outcome of doing the right or wrong deeds.

Electric power utilized by man expresses itself differently through different instruments. According to their attainments acquired through their karma in this life and in the past lives, men become the instruments for the expression of the *Sat-cit-ānanda* positively as well as negatively. The qualities mentioned herein are all come from the same source — Iswara.

Who are they that have been the vehicles for the abundant expression of the glories of Iswara? The adumbration ensues :—

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥ ६

महत्-ऋषयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारः मनवः तथा ।
मद्-भावाः मानसाः जाताः येषाम् लोके इमाः प्र-जाः ॥

*maharsayaḥ sapta pūrve catvāro manavas tathā* ।
*madbhāvā mānasā jātā yeṣāṁ loka imāḥ prajāḥ* ॥

महर्षयः *maharṣayaḥ* the great Rishis सप्त *sapta* seven पूर्वे *pūrve* ancient चत्वारः *catvāraḥ* four मनवः *manavaḥ* Manus तथा *tathā* also मद्भावाः *mad bhāvāḥ* possessed of powers like me मानसाः *mānasāḥ* from mind जाताः *jātāḥ* born येषाम् *yeṣāṁ* from whom लोके *loke* in world इमाः *imāḥ* these प्रजाः *prajāḥ* creatures

**The seven great Rishis and the four ancient Manus, endowed with My power, were born of My mind; and from them have come forth all the creatures in the world. 6**

The seven great Rishis are Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Pulah, Pulastya, Kratu and Angiras. The four

Ethereal bliss is the fruit of all forms of Godly pursuit.

No picture can be painted on a fresh glass. But if it be coated with the required chemicals, painting on it then becomes possible and effective. Similarly if man's heart were coated with the chemicals of devotion, the imprinting of the august presence of Iswara on it becomes easy.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How does the Lord respond to these divergent devotional activities of the devotees? The assurance ensues :—

**The Buddhi-yoga — 10-11**

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ १०

तेषाम् सतत-युज्-तानाम् भज्-अताम् प्रीति-पूर्व-कम् ।
(दा-दा) ददा-मि बुद्धि-योगम् तम् येन माम् उप-यान्ति ते ॥

*teṣāṁ satatayuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prītipūrvakam* ।
*dadāmi buddhiyogaṁ taṁ yena māṁ upayānti te* ॥

तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* to them सततयुक्तानाम् *satata yuktānāṁ* ever steadfast भजताम् *bhajatāṁ* (of the) worshipping प्रीतिपूर्वकम् *prīti pūrvakaṁ* with love ददामि *dadāmi* (I) give बुद्धियोगम् *buddhi yogaṁ* yoga of discrimination तम् *taṁ* that येन *yena* by which माम् *māṁ* to me उपयान्ति *upayānti* come ते *te* they

**To them, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give the yoga of discrimination by which they come to Me. 10**

On trial sugar is found to taste sweet. Thought is then bestowed to make varieties of sweetmeats with it. This is the *buddhi yoga* pertaining to sugar.

established न *na* not अत्र *atra* here संशय *samśayaḥ* doubt

**He who knows in truth this glory and power of Mine is endowed with unfaltering yoga; of this there is no doubt. 7**

Electricity manifests itself in various forms in instruments suited to those forms In whatever form this energy expresses itself, the power is the same This is a specimen of the primordial power of the Lord evolving itself into the glorious varieties of the sentient and the insentient, abounding in Nature The discerning man knows that whatever he senses, is the power and glory of Iswara He cannot therefore be any more separate from Iswara than he can be separate from earth. His yoga with God is thereby made unfaltering

A lamp cannot burn without oil Even so, man cannot be bereft of God

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is meant by unfaltering yoga ? The answer comes .—

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥ ८

अहम् सर्वस्य प्र-भव मद् त सर्वम् प्र वर्तते ।
इति मन्-त्वा भज-अन्ते माम् बुधा भाव-सम्-अनु-इ-ता ॥

*aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvam pravartate* ।
*iti matvā bhajante mām budhā bhāvasamanvitāḥ* ॥

अहम् *aham* I सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all प्रभव *prabhavaḥ* the source मत्त *mattaḥ* from me सर्वम् *sarvam* everything प्रवर्तते *pravartate* evolves इति *iti* thus मत्वा *matvā*

**Out of pure compassion for them, dwelling in their hearts, I destroy the ignorance-born darkness, by the luminous lamp of wisdom. 11**

The Lord's choosing to reside in the hearts of beings is His compassion. Because of His presence as Conscience, beings are prompted to seek what is good or at least what seems good. The lamp of wisdom that the Lord lights is constituted of divine components. Discrimination functions as the container of oil. The contentment coming from *bhakti* is the oil. The flame gets put out by foul air. But this flame is fed by the pure air of meditation on Iswara. *Prajñā* or the Awareness of the Self ensuing from the constant *Brahmacharya*, serves as the wick. The heart freed from all worries and anxieties is the lamp niche. A burning lamp runs the risk of being blown out by a gust. But a mind unaffected by attachment and aversion is the best wind-screen to this lamp. The unbroken consciousness of Iswara is the flame emanating from this lamp of wisdom, set up in the heart of the devotee. He beholds the Divine Presence within himself with the aid of this divine lamp.

The policeman patrolling at night carries a bull's-eye lantern with the aid of which he sees the persons loitering about. But this lantern does not disclose its carrier. If he, however, turns it on himself the others then come to know who he is. Likewise Iswara reveals Nature and its contents, but keeps Himself hidden. Nobody can see Him except through His grace and compassion.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Arjuna now recounts his understanding of the divine manifestations :—

and माम् *mām* me नित्यम् *nityaṁ* always तुष्यन्ति *tuṣyanti* are satisfied च *ca* and रमन्ति *ramanti* (they) are delighted च *ca* and

**With their minds fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, enlightening each other and ever speaking of Me, they are contented and delighted. 9**

The easiest of all acts for one is to fix one's mind on what one likes most. The child that understands that its all in all are mother and father, gets spontaneously absorbed in the parents. The devotee who comes to know that the Lord is the source and stay of himself, naturally directs his mind on the Maker. An adult sacrifices his everything in the service of the parents. Nothing is dearer to one than life. The *Bhakta* devotes that life to the Lord. But it is not like the lovers doting on each other; for there is lustful selfishness in their act. The devotee, on the other hand, invites others to share the devotion with them. Temperamental differences are set aside in this holy act. The mention of the Lord, made to him by the others is delightful. He devotedly recounts his understanding of the Lord to the others and eagerly receives their experiences and dissertations on the Lord. Repeated recount of His glories does not render them stale or repugnant. Rather they become increasingly absorbing. Divergent dispositions do in this divine manner get commingled in God.

Holy communications create contentment and not the frustration which follows indulgence.

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा ।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३

आहुः त्वाम् ऋषयः सर्वे देव-ऋषिः नारदः तथा ।
असितः देवलः व्यासः स्वयम् च एव ब्रू-ई-सि-मे ॥

*āhus tvāṁ ṛṣayaḥ sarve devarṣir nāradas tathā* ।
*asito devalo vyāsaḥ svayaṁ cai 'va bravīṣi me* ॥

आहुः *āhuḥ* (they) declared त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee ऋषयः *ṛṣayaḥ* the Rishis सर्वे *sarve* all देवर्षिः *devarṣiḥ* Deva Rishi नारदः *nāradaḥ* Narada तथा *tathā* also असितः *asitaḥ* Asita देवलः *devalaḥ* Devala व्यासः *vyāsaḥ* Vyasa स्वयम् *svayaṁ* thyself च *ca* and एव *eva* even ब्रवीषि *bravīṣi* (thou) sayest मे *me* to me

**All the Rishis have thus acclaimed You, as also the Deva Rishi Narada; so also Asita, Devala and Vyasa; and now You Yourself say it to me. 13**

The Rishi is one who has transcended the senses and the intellect and contacted the Reality through intuition.

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ १४

सर्वम् एतत् ऋतम् मन्-ये यत् माम् वद्-असि के-शव ।
न हि ते भग-वन् वि-अक्तिम् विदुः देवाः न दानवाः ॥

*sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye yan māṁ vadasi keśava* ।
*na hi te bhagavan vyaktiṁ vidur devā na dānavāḥ* ॥

सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all एतत् *etat* this ऋतम् *ṛtaṁ* true मन्ये *manye* (I) think यत् *yat* which माम् *māṁ* to me वदसि *vadasi* (thou) sayest केशव *keśava* O Kesava न *na* not हि *hi* verily ते *te* thy भगवन् *bhagavan* O blessed Lord

The glory of God begins to dawn in the mind of the *sadhaka* who devoutly and persistently practises yoga. This initial experience gives impetus for further pursuit of yoga, leading to greater cognition of God's glory. This is the *buddhi yoga* endowed with which the *sadhaka* gets to know more and yet more of the sweet sublimity of the Lord and be ardently drawn to Him. Devotion does this way wax with *buddhi yoga*.

A man confined within a dark room contacts a ray of light coming in through a tiny aperture. He gathers knowledge of light to that extent. But as the aperture increases in size his conception of light widens A man in the broad day light has his own view of light Similar to this, God reveals Himself in varying degrees and aspects according to the nature and attainments of His devotees. — **Sri Ramakrishna**

How does the *buddhi yoga* benefit the devotees? The elucidation ensues :—

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ ११

तेषाम् एव अनु कम्पा-अर्थम् अहम् अ-ज्ञान-जम् तमः ।
नाश्-अयामि आत्म-भाव-स्थ. ज्ञान-दीपेन भास् वता ॥

*teṣām evā 'nukampārtham aham ajñānajam tamaḥ* ।
*nāśayāmy ātmabhāvastho jñānadīpena bhāsvatā* ॥

तेषाम् *teṣām* for them एव *eva* mere अनुकम्पार्थम् *anukampārtham* out of compassion अहम् *aham* I अज्ञानजम् *ajñānajam* born of ignorance तमः *tamaḥ* darkness नाशयामि *nāśayāmi* (I) destroy आत्मभावस्थः *ātma bhāvasthaḥ* dwelling within their self ज्ञानदीपेन *jñāna dīpena* by the lamp of knowledge भास्वता *bhāsvatā* luminous

भूतेश *bhūtesa* O Lord of beings देवदेव *devadeva* O God of gods जगत्पते *jagatpate* O ruler of the world

**Verily You alone know Yourself by Yourself, O Purushottama, O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the world. 15**

The individual souls are called *Purushas* out of courtesy because they temporarily occupy the *Puri* of the *Prakriti* and then they vacate it when they get *mukti.* But the Lord being the eternal Presiding Deity over the *Prakriti,* He is aptly eulogized as *Purushottama.*

Being the origin of all beings, He is *Bhūta bhāvanaḥ.*

Ruler of all beings that He is, the appellations *Bhūtesa* and *Jagatpati* are appropriate to Him.

His glory in its entirety is known to Him alone and to none else.

An individual took a diamond to the market-place for valuation and asked several shop-keepers about it. The brinjal seller opined that five baskets of brinjals might be bartered for that gem. The rice merchant viewed that two bags of rice could be liberally given in exchange for it. The draper in his turn held that a bale of linen might be unhesitatingly offered for that precious thing. Finally it was given to the diamond merchant who alone could value it at two lakhs of rupees! In this fashion the Lord is also beheld in varying ways according to the people's power of understanding. God's glories are verily unfathomable.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६

वच्-तुम् अर्ह-सि अ-शेषेण दिव्याः हि आत्मन्-वि-भूतयः ।
याभिः वि-भू-तिभिः लोकान् इमान् त्वम् वि-आप्-य तिष्ठ-सि ॥

**Bliss Evident in God's Glories — 12-18**

अर्जुन उवाच

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥ १२

परम् ब्रह्म परम् धाम पवित्रम् परमम् भवान् ।
पुरुषम् शाश्वतम् दिव्यम् आदि-देवम् अ-जम् वि-भुम् ॥

*arjuna uvāca*
*paraṁ brahma paraṁ dhāma*
*pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān* ।
*puruṣaṁ śāśvataṁ divyam*
*ādidevam ajaṁ vibhum* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

परम् *paraṁ* supreme ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman परम् *paraṁ* supreme धाम *dhāma* abode पवित्रम् *pavitraṁ* purifier परमम् *paramam* supreme भवान् *bhavān* thou पुरुषम् *puruṣaṁ* Purusha शाश्वतम् *śāśvatam* eternal दिव्यम् *divyaṁ* divine आदिदेवम् *ādidevaṁ* primeval God अजम् *ajam* unborn विभुम् *vibhuṁ* omnipresent

**Arjuna said:**

**You are the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, the Eternal, Divine *Purusha, the Primeval Deity, the Unborn, the Omnipresent.*** **12**

*Param Brahman* is the Supreme Brahman, *Nirguna Nirupādhika Brahman,* the Pure Consciousness.

*Apara Brahman* is Iswara, *Saguna Brahman,* the Reality with all attributes and glory.

*Param Dhāma* is the Substratum of everything manifest and unmanifest, the Supreme Abode.

कथम् *katham* how विद्याम् *vidyām* shall know अहम् *aham* I योगिन् *yogin* O Yogin त्वाम् *tvām* thee सदा *sadā* always परिचिन्तयन् *paricintayan* meditating केषु केषु *keṣu keṣu* in what and what च *ca* and भावेषु *bhāveṣu* aspects चिन्त्यः *cintyaḥ* to be thought of असि *asi* (thou) art भगवन् *bhagavan* O blessed Lord मया *mayā* by me

**How may I know You, O Yogin, by constant meditation? In what various aspects are You, O Lord, to be thought of by me? 17**

How shall my extrovert mind cognize Your presence in things objective? The sight of the toys of the child stirs up the thought of that child in the mother: May I, in that manner, have the means to revel in You through the things of the world?

As the toy fruits and toy elephant remind one of the true fruits and elephant, the symbols and images remind the devotee of the eternal and formless God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ १८

वि-स्तरेण आत्मनः योगम् वि-भू-तिम् च जन-अर्दन ।
भूयः कथ-अय तृप्-तिः हि श्रृ-णु-अतः न अस्-ति मे अ-मृ-तम् ॥

*vistareṇā 'tmano yogaṁ vibhūtiṁ ca janārdana |*
*bhūyaḥ kathaya tṛptir hi śṛṇvato nā 'sti me 'mṛtam ||*

विस्तरेण *vistareṇa* in detail आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* thy योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga विभूतिम् *vibhūtiṁ* glory च *ca* and जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again कथय *kathaya* tell तृप्तिः *tṛptiḥ* contentment हि *hi* for शृण्वतः *śṛṇvataḥ* (of) hearing न *na* not अस्ति *asti* is मे *me* of me अमृतम् nectar

व्यक्तिम् *vyaktiṁ* manifestation विदुः *viduḥ* know देवाः *devāḥ* gods न *na* not दानवाः *dānavāḥ* Danavas

**I hold as true, all that You say to me, O Kesava. Neither the Devas nor the Danavas, O Lord, know verily Your manifestation. 14**

*Bhagavan* is he who fully manifests six divine qualities which are: *bala*, omnipotence; *dharma*, righteousness; *aisvarya*, lordship; *sri* wealth and beauty; *jnāna*, wisdom; *vairāgya*, dispassion. Further He knows the past, present and future of beings. His manifestation in the human form remains unknown to the Devas themselves; how then shall the Danavas or Asuras come to know of His intents and extents !

The sun is immensely greater than the earth; but because of the distance it appears as a small disk. In this wise Iswara's attributes are infinite, but we know very little of Him because of our ignorance.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The Lord being the Origin of everything :—

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १५

स्वयम् एव आत्मना आत्मानम् वेद्-थ त्वम् पुरुष-उत्तम ।
भूत-भावन भूत-ईश देव-देव जगत्-पते ॥

*svayam eva 'tmanā 'tmānam vettha tvam puruṣottama |*
*bhūtabhāvana bhūteśa devadeva jagatpate ||*

स्वयम् *svayam* thyself एव *eva* only आत्मना *ātmanā* by thyself आत्मानम् *ātmānam* thyself वेत्थ *vettha* (thou) knowest त्वम् *tvam* thou पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama* O Purusha supreme भूतभावन *bhūta bhāvana* O source of beings

प्राधान्यतः *prādhānyataḥ* in their prominence कुरुश्रेष्ठ *kuru śreṣṭha* best of the Kurus न *na* not अस्ति *asti* is अन्तः *antaḥ* end विस्तरस्य *vistarasya* of detail मे *me* of me

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Very well! I shall now tell you My divine glories according to their prominence, O best of the Kurus; there is no end to the details of My manifestation. 19**

The splendours in Nature are all verily the attributes of Iswara. It is impossible for Iswara Himself to recount them all. A few specimens only can be mentioned; His infinitude may be inferred from them.

To define God from scriptural knowledge is like defining the holy city of Banaras after getting an idea of it from the map.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The truth about the universe has to be known at the outset. That is :—

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥ २०

अहम् आत्मा गुडाका-ईश सर्व-भूत-आशय-स्थितः ।
अहम् आदिः च मध्यम् च भूतानाम् अन्तः एव च ॥

*aham ātmā guḍākeśa sarva bhūtāśayasthitaḥ* ।
*aham ādiś ca madhyaṁ ca bhūtānām anta eva ca* ॥

अहम् *ahaṁ* I आत्मा *ātmā* the Self गुडाकेश *guḍākeśa* O Gudakesa सर्वभूत आशयस्थितः *sarva bhūta āśayasthitaḥ* seated in the hearts of all beings अहम् *ahaṁ* I आदिः *ādiḥ* beginning च *ca* and मध्यम् *madhyaṁ* the middle च *ca* and भूतानाम् *bhūtānāṁ* of (all) beings अन्तः *antaḥ* the end एव *eva* even च *ca* and

*vaktum arhasy aśeṣena divyā hy ātmavibhūtayaḥ* ।
*yābhir vibhūtibhir lokān imāṁs tvaṁ vyāpya tiṣṭhasi* ॥

वक्तुम् *vaktum* to tell अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) shouldst अशेषेण *aśeṣena* without remainder दिव्याः *divyāḥ* divine हि *hi* indeed आत्मविभूतयः *ātma vibhūtayaḥ* thy glories याभिः *yābhiḥ* by which विभूतिभिः *vibhūtibhiḥ* by glories लोकान् *lokān* worlds इमान् *imān* these त्वम् *tvam* thou व्याप्य *vyāpya* having pervaded तिष्ठसि *tiṣṭhasi* existeth

**Condescend to tell without reserve of Your divine glories, by which glories You remain pervading all these worlds. 16**

A musician alone can bring out the fine touches in melody The strength of an elephant could be demonstrated only by that stately animal turning out gigantic work. The wealth of a monarch can be well recounted by none but himself. It is only given to an Incarnation of God to reveal all of His divine splendours and glories.

The revelation of God comes purely by His mercy He is the sun of knowledge It is possible for a single ray of His to enlighten the whole world We are therefore able to understand one another and to acquire knowledge in all of its forms More than all these, we get to know Him by His grace only.

—Sri Ramakrishna

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ १७

कथम् विद्-यास् अहम् योगिन् त्वाम् सदा परि-चिन्त्-अयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्-य असु सि भग वन् मया ॥

*katham vidyām aham yogiṁs tvām sadā paricintayan* ।
*keṣu-kesu ca bhāveṣu cintyo 'si bhagavan mayā* ॥

**Of the Adityas I am Vishnu; of the luminaries, the radiant Sun; I am Marichi of the Maruts; of the asterisms the Moon am I. 21**

Though all flowers, fruits and crops come from the same land, the best among them are selected for exhibition. The whole of the manifested universe is the glory of Iswara; but the prominent among them, those that arrest the attention of the beholder, are selectively mentioned as the *vibhūtis*, or the attributes of Iswara.

The same Aditya assumes twelve names during the twelve months. These names commencing from April are Amsu, Dhata, Indra, Aryama, Vivasva, Bhaga, Parjanya, Dvashta, Mitra, Vishnu, Varna and Pusha. The Aditya of January is called Vishnu, who is very much liked by people for his commencing his course towards the summer solstice progressively dispelling the pinching cold of winter.

In the Vishnu Sahasranama the 258th name is Vishnu attributed to the sun god traversing the universe. Vishnu Himself has become Suryanarayana.

Among the forty-nine Maruts or wind gods Marichi is the foremost. The wind causes immense good to the world. The best of the wind gods is therefore identified with Iswara.

The luminary of the day is the sun. The foremost among the luminaries at night is the moon. These two heavenly bodies are therefore viewed with veneration as the manifest representatives of Iswara.

**Tell me again in detail, O Janardana, of Your yoga powers and attributes; for I am not satiated with hearing Your life-infusing words. 18**

He is Janardana who is adored by people both for earthly enjoyments and for emancipation Yoga here indicates the power to know and handle things properly. They are the attributes of God which spontaneously remind man of Him Absorption in the attributes of God is as good as the absorption in Him. While matters earthy are satiating, matters Godly are never so The *Jivatman* grows increasingly in divinity as he dwells on the divine attributes of the Paramatman

The relationship between Iswara and *Jivatman* is like that between magnet and iron.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Vibhutis Defined — 19 40

श्री भगवानुवाच

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १९

हन्त ते कथ्-अयिष्यामि दिव्-या हि आत्मन् वि भू त-य ।
प्राधान्यत कुरु श्रेष्ठ न अस् ति अन्त वि-स्तरस्य मे ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*hanta te kathayiṣyāmi divyā hy ātmavibhūtayaḥ* ।
*prādhānyataḥ kuruśreṣṭha nā 'sty anto vistarasya me* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said

हन्त *hanta* now, very well ते *te* to thee कथयिष्यामि *kathayiṣyāmi* (I) will declare दिव्या *divyāḥ* divine हि *hi* indeed आत्मविभूतय *ātma vibhūtayaḥ* my glories

of all the sensations, it is reckoned as an attribute of the Lord.

The difference between the living and the dead is in the presence or otherwise of consciousness. The more evolved the being, the clearer is the consciousness. Ultimately the Pure Consciousness gets equated with God.

As wealth distinguishes the wealthy man, these glories reveal the Lord.

रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥ २३

रुद्राणाम् शम्-करः च अस्-मि वित्त-ईशः यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनाम् पावकः च अस्-मि मेरुः शिखरिणाम् अहम् ॥

*rudrāṇāṁ śaṁkaraś cā 'smi vitteśo yakṣarakṣasām* ।
*vasūnāṁ pāvakaś cā 'smi meruḥ śikhariṇām aham* ॥

रुद्राणाम् *rudrāṇāṁ* among the Rudras शंकरः *śaṁkaraḥ* Sankara च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am वित्तेशः *vitteśaḥ* Vittesa or Kubera यक्षरक्षसाम् *yakṣa rakṣasāṁ* among Yakshas and Rakshasas वसूनाम् *vasūnāṁ* among Vasus पावकः *pāvakaḥ* Pavaka च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am मेरुः *meruḥ* Meru शिखरिणाम् *śikhariṇāṁ* of mountains अहम् *ahaṁ* I

**Of the Rudras I am Sankara, of the Yakshas and Rakshasas I am Kubera. Of the Vasus I am Pavaka and of mountains I am Meru. 23**

Rudras are eleven in number. Puranas are not all agreed in naming them. But their wide accepted names are Ajaikapad, Ahirbudhnya, Virabhadra, Girisa, Sankara, Aparajita, Hara, Ankaraka, Pinaki,

**I am the Self, O Gudakesa, seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of all beings. 20**

The Lord is the innermost Self in all beings, which are all His gross manifestation The effect is nothing but the cause in another form The Lord is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe Gudakesa is he who has conquered sleep. The one awakened in the Self can cognize the fact that Iswara is putting on the appearance of the visible universe.

It is my Cosmic Mother who has become everything She of omnipotence has become the universe and the beings in it She reveals Herself as the body, the intellect, the virtuous path and the spiritual pursuit *Sakti* and Brahman are one In the manifest state She is *Sakti* and in the absolute state, Brahman

— Sri Ramakrishna

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥ २१

आदित्यानाम् अहम् विष्णु ज्योतिष् आम् रवि अम्शु-मान् ।
मरीचि मरुत्-आम् अस-मि नक्षत्राणाम् अहम् शशी ॥

*ādityānām aham visnur jyotisām ravir amśumān* ।
*maricir marutām asmi naksatrānām aham śaśi* ॥

आदित्यानाम् *ādityānām* among the Adityas अहम् *aham* I विष्णु *viṣṇuḥ* Vishnu ज्योतिषाम् *jyotisām* among lights रवि *ravih* the sun अंशुमान् *amśumān* radiant मरीचि *maricih* Marichi मरुताम् *marutām* of the Maruts (winds) अस्मि *asmi* (I) am नक्षत्राणाम् *nakṣatrānām* among the stars अहम् *aham* I शशी *śaśi* the moon

Devas resort to the Mount Meru of mythological fame, the senses and *prāṇa* in the human tabernacle are all adhering to the spinal cord. The Lord therefore speaks of it as His special manifestation.

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥ २४

पुरोधसाम् च मुख्यम् माम् विद्-धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेना-नीनाम् अहम् स्कन्दः सरसाम् अस्-मि सागरः ॥

*purodhasāṁca mukhyaṁ māṁ viddhi pārthabṛhaspatim*
*senānīnām ahaṁ skandaḥ sarasām asmi sāgaraḥ* ||

पुरोधसाम् *purodhasāṁ* among the household priests च *ca* and मुख्यम् *mukhyaṁ* the chief माम् *māṁ* me विद्धि *viddhi* know पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha बृहस्पतिम् *bṛhaspatiṁ* Brihaspati सेनानीनाम् *senānīnāṁ* among generals अहम् *ahaṁ* I स्कन्दः *skandaḥ* Skanda सरसाम् *sarasāṁ* among lakes अस्मि *asmi* (I) am सागरः *sāgaraḥ* the ocean

**Of priests, O Partha, know Me to be the chief, Brihaspati; of generals I am Skanda and of bodies of water I am the ocean. 24**

The function of the priest is to administer ritualistic worship and a sanctified code of conduct among people. Brihaspati discharges this sacred duty among the Devas and so he is a deity of great eminence. Seekers of learning and wisdom pay homage to Brihaspati. It is but proper to behold him as endowed with the attributes of Iswara.

Godhead can be reached only through right understanding and right execution. These two divine qualities are personified as Ganesa and Skanda, the sons of Siva. His second son, Skanda is the

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ २२

वेदानाम् साम वेद अस् मि देवानाम् अस् मि वासव ।
इन्द्रियाणाम् मन च अस् मि भूतानाम् अस्-मि चेतना ॥

*vedānām sāmavedo 'smı devānām asmı vāsavaḥ* ।
*ındrıyānām manaś cā 'smı bhūtānām asmı cetanā* ॥

वेदानाम् *vedānām* among the Vedas सामवेद *sāmavedaḥ* the Sama Veda अस्मि *asmı* (I) am देवानाम् *devānām* among the gods अस्मि *asmı* (I) am वासव *vāsavaḥ* Vasava इन्द्रियाणाम् *ındrıyānām* among the senses मन *manaḥ* mind च *ca* and अस्मि *asmı* (I) am भूतानाम् *bhutānām* among living beings अस्मि *asmı* (I) am चेतना *cetanā* intelligence

**Of the Vedas I am the Saman; I am Vasava among the Devas, of the senses I am the mind and among living beings I am consciousness. 22**

One of the names attributed to Vishnu is *Sāmaga,* which means the chanter of the Sama Veda Among the four Vedas, Saman is the one best set to music. It is therefore enchanting even to those who cannot understand it Thought of God comes to all who chant or hear it It is verily the glory of God.

Vasava is another name of Indra, the lord of the Devas By sheer merit the deserving ones rise to this position And all merits are the glories of God

The functioning of all the five senses becomes purposeless when the mind wanders away from them The ways of the absent-minded man verify this position very clearly Mind being the recorder

*Yajna* is the act of the *Jivatman* making himself over to the Paramatman. The easiest and the most potent of all *yajnas* is the *Japa-yajna*. Constant mental repetition of the Lord's name is *Japa-yajna*. It can be performed at any time and in the midst of any other activity. It involves no harm or hindrance to anybody. The Lord is present where *Japa-yajna* takes place.

The Vegetable kingdom is classified as the unmoving beings. They are stationary lives, growing and thriving in the same place. Hills and mountains are held as imbued with dormant life. They are therefore classified with the vegetable kingdom. Among the mountains the Himalaya is the greatest, striking wonder on its beholder. The glory of God is patent in it.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥ २६

अश्वत्थः सर्व-वृक्षाणाम् देव-ऋषीणाम् च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वाणाम् चित्र-रथः सिध्-तानाम् कपिलः मुनिः ॥

*aśvatthaḥ sarvavṛkṣāṇāṁ devarṣīṇāṁ ca nāradaḥ* ।
*gandharvāṇāṁ citrarathaḥ siddhānāṁ kapilo muniḥ* ॥

अश्वत्थः *aśvatthaḥ* Asvattha सर्ववृक्षाणाम् *sarva vṛkṣāṇāṁ* among all trees देवर्षीणाम् *devarṣīṇāṁ* among divine Rishis च *ca* and नारदः *nāradaḥ* Narada गन्धर्वाणाम् *gandharvāṇāṁ* among Gandharvas चित्ररथः *citrarathaḥ* Chitraratha सिद्धानाम् *siddhānāṁ* among the Siddhas or the perfected कपिलः *kapilaḥ* Kapila मुनिः *muniḥ* sage

**Of all trees I am Asvattha; of Deva Rishis I am Narada; of the Gandharvas I am Chitraratha and of the Siddhas I am the Muni Kapila. 26**

Bhaga and Sambhu The cosmic function of the Rudras is to make men cry, true to the etymological meaning of this word Crying of people in particular is always for gain either in *Preyas* or *Sreyas*. The characteristic of the Rudras is to make them cry for *Sreyas* Sankara among these eleven is the doer of good as his name indicates. Through distress, he takes the *sadhakas* direct Godward Spiritual anguish purifies people very quickly

Yakshas and Rakshasas belong to the celestials The former of these two groups are very fond of acquiring wealth and the latter of hoarding it. Both of these battalions serve their king Kubera, the lord of fabulous wealth Whoever among men, strives for, on right lines, and saves money becomes a Kubera in his own way Though of a transitory nature, wealth wields power in its own way and is therefore a glory of God

Vasus are eight in number They are land, water, fire, air, ether, moon, sun and star, constituting the gross structure of Nature Of these, Pavaka or fire assumes various degrees of warmth and sustains life The Lord therefore mentions it as His special manifestation

The golden Mount Meru is believed to be the axis round which all the heavenly bodies rotate. But it is an allegorical representation of the *brahma danda* or the spinal cord in the human structure The science of Yoga extols it as the golden lustrous *sushumna* from which all forms of sensation emanate. It is consciousness that gives it its brilliance. As the

sion and overlordship. A Muni is he who is constantly established in *Japa-yajna.* Sage Kapila is one endowed with all these virtues. He is the author of the Samkhya system of philosophy. Further he is held to be an incarnation of Vishnu. It is but natural that the Lord should claim him as His own.

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि मामम‍ृतोद्भवम् ।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥ २७

उच्चैः-श्रवसम् अश्वानाम् विद्-धि माम् अ-मृत-उद्-भवम् ।
ऐरावतम् गज-इन्द्राणाम् नराणाम् च नर-अधिपम् ॥

*uccaiḥśravasam aśvānāṁ viddhi māṁ amṛtodbhavaṁ* ।
*airāvataṁ gajendrāṇāṁ narāṇāṁ ca narādhipam* ॥

उच्चैःश्रवसम् *uccaiḥśravasaṁ* Ucchaisravas अश्वानाम् *aśvānāṁ* among horses विद्धि *viddhi* know माम् *māṁ* me अमृतोद्भवम् *amṛtodbhavaṁ* born of nectar ऐरावतम् *airavataṁ* Airavata गजेन्द्राणाम् *gajendrāṇāṁ* among lordly elephants नराणाम् *narāṇāṁ* among men च *ca* and नराधिपम् *narādhipaṁ* the king

**Of horses, know Me to be the nectar-born Ucchaisravas; of lordly elephants, Airavata and of men, the monarch.** 27

Mythology speaks elaborately of the churning of the ocean of milk by Devas and Asuras to get nectar from it. The horse Ucchaisravas and the elephant Airavata along with several other high beings and great things came out of that unique undertaking. But this event is an allegorical statement of the eternal process of the good and bad people jointly churning the ocean of life to obtain happiness through wealth, learning and prosperity.

best among the generalissimos leading Siva's hosts to victory over the demons It is but appropriate that the Lord claims this general as His own embodiment

The ocean suggests the infinitude of the Lord. Merging the mind in its expanse is a form of the worship of the Almighty.

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥ २५

महत्-ऋषीणाम् भृगु अहम् गिराम् अस्-मि एकम् अ-क्षरम् ।
यज्ञानाम् जप-यज्ञ अस्-मि स्थावराणाम् हिम-आलय ॥

*maharsīnām bhṛgur aham girām asmy ekam akṣaram* ।
*yajñānām japayajño 'smi sthāvarāṇām himālayaḥ* ॥

महर्षीणां *maharsīnām* among the great Rishis भृगु *bhṛguḥ* Bhrigu अहम् *aham* I गिराम् *girām* among words अस्मि *asmi* (I) am एकम् *ekam* the one अक्षरम् *aksaram* syllable यज्ञानाम् *yajñānām* among sacrifices जपयज्ञ *japa yajñaḥ* the sacrifice of silent repetition अस्मि *asmi* (I) am स्थावराणाम् *sthāvarāṇām* among immovable things हिमालय *himālayaḥ* Himalaya

**Of the great Rishis I am Bhrigu; of utterances I am the monosyllable "Om". Of Yajnas I am japa-*yajna and of unmoving things, the Himalaya.*** **25**

Among the Rishis born of the mind of Iswara, Bhrigu is ever in the highest superconscious plane. So the Lord's glory is revealed best through him.

"Om" is the most sacred sound symbol of Iswara Constant utterance of this monosyllable is a sure means to reach Divinity. It is equivalent to Iswara.

except with the weapon of *Vajra.* But where on earth or in heaven could the material be found to achieve this great end? The material for the manufacture of this all powerful arm is the bones of a sage who is all purity, all austerity and all perfection, voluntarily given to this cause of universal welfare. Indra found the fulfilment of all of these conditions in the sage Dadhichi. On Indra's presenting his case, the sage sat in *Samādhi* and gave up the body for the conquest of evil. The thunderbolt could be made because of the sacrifice of Dadhichi. Manufacture of *Vajrāyudha* is the ideal ever held out to India in particular and humanity in general, to combat wickedness. The willing self-sacrifice of a large number of holy men and women for public welfare is what is wanted. This holy act is allegorically put as the weapon of *Vajra.* The Lord is present where the weapon of *Vajra* is present.

Kamadhuk or the milch cow of desire is one of the rare products from the churning of the ocean of milk already mentioned. This cow has the power to supply all the requirements in life. Tradition has it that the Rishi Vasishta was never in want because of the profuse supply made by this divine cow. Mention is made in chapter three, stanza ten that a willing and cheerful mind and the endeavours on right lines constitute this milch cow of desire. In plain words, an exuberant mind and wholesome ventures are indeed the glories of God.

Kandarpa is Cupid — the personification of the progenitive instinct. Progeny is possible because

Asvattha is the peepul or the holy fig tree. It yields no edible fruit and nothing in this tree is in any way useful to man. Still it has ever been associated with the worship of the Divine. Any thought of this tree brings in its train ideas and ideals all connected with God. It is, for this reason, recognized as *His vibhūti.*

The spiritually enlightened ones are called the Rishis. Not only from among men, but also from among the Devas, Rishis have sprung up. Among *the Deva Rishis the sage Narada is the foremost. He* constantly sings the glory of God. In addition to this he is famous for setting up strifes and quarrels which end as blessings in disguise. Contact with Narada amounts to contact with God Himself. He is therefore the glory of God.

The Gandharvas are celestials with several good and useful traits. They are invoked to safeguard the intoxicating Soma juice associated with some forms of *Yajnas. They are expert physicians and* musicians. They are given to excessive lust and are for this reason invoked in wedlocks. The gamblers seek the aid of the Gandharvas, who are inordinately fond of this art. The Vedas set to tune are expounded by these celestials. At times they play the role of the preceptors to the Rishis, in this respect. Chitraratha being the king of these heavenly beings, it is proper that the Lord claims him as a divine *attribute of His.*

They are called Siddhas who are endowed from birth onwards with righteousness, wisdom, dispas-

The Nagas are non-poisonous snakes. Ananta among them is conceived of or represented as five-headed. This is a symbol of the *Prakriti* being made up of the five elements. Because the Lord is resting on Ananta, He speaks of it as His *vibhūti.*

Varuna is one of the Vedic deities. He has his jurisdiction on earth and in heaven. He is noted for intelligence. With the march of time he associates himself with the water-deities and becomes their king; as such he is also one of the glories of the Lord.

Pitrus are the departed ancestors. The very first to enter the world of the manes is Aryama and so he is the presiding deity over them. All those who pay homage to their departed ancestors pray to Aryama as well. This way he becomes the *vibhūti* of the Lord.

The practice of self-control is called *yama,* in the science of Yoga. Punishment in the form of pain is inflicted on one who does not practise self-control. And this is the experience of one and all. The lord of death is called Yama. He does not deviate an iota in his deal of justice. Life and death are meted out by Yama to beings according to their desert. He is therefore the best among the controllers. This merit comes to Yama from Iswara.

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।
मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥ ३०

प्रह्लादः च अस्-मि दैत्यानाम् कालः कलयताम् अहम् ।
मृगाणाम् च मृग-इन्द्रः अहम् वैनतेयः च पक्षिणाम् ॥

A monarch born with royal excellence is regarded as a spark of the divinity come in the human form. The best of the horses, the best of the elephants and the best of the human are indeed the manifestations of the divine glory of the Lord

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ २८

आयुधानाम् अहम् वज्रम् धेनूनाम् अस्-मि काम-धुक् ।
प्र-जनः च अस् मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणाम् अस्-मि वासुकिः ॥

*āyudhānām aham vajram dhenūnām asmi kāmadhuk* ।
*prajanaś cā 'smi kandarpaḥ sarpāṇām asmi vāsukiḥ* ॥

आयुधानाम् *āyudhānām* among weapons अहम् *aham* I वज्रम् *vajram* the thunderbolt धेनूनाम् *dhenūnām* among cows अस्मि *asmi* (I) am कामधुक् *kāmadhuk* Kamadhuk (Surabhi) the heavenly cow which yields all desires प्रजन. *prajanaḥ* the progenitor च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am कन्दर्प *kandarpaḥ* Kandarpa (Kamadev) सर्पाणाम् *sarpāṇām* among serpents अस्मि *asmi* (I) am वासुकि· *vāsukih* Vasuki

**Of weapons I am the thunderbolt; of cows I am Kamadhuk; I am Kandarpa of the progenitors; of serpents I am Vasuki. 28**

Mace and discus are the wonted weapons of Sriman Narayana. Instead of referring to these celebrated weapons, the Lord has purposely made mention of *Vajra* or the thunderbolt. The former weapons are eternally part and parcel of His innate being Whereas *Vajra* is a manufactured one for a set purpose. Indra, the lord of the Devas found it impossible to vanquish the invincible Vritrasura

Vainateya is the son of Vinata. This is another name for Garuda who, being the vehicle of Sri Vishnu, may be equated with Him.

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।
झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ ३१

पवनः पवताम् अस्-मि रामः शस्त्र-भृताम् अहम् ।
झषाणाम् मकरः च अस्-मि स्रोतस्-आम् अस्-मि जाह्नवी ॥

*pavanaḥ pavatām asmi rāmaḥ śastrabhṛtām aham |*
*jhaṣāṇāṁ makaraś cā 'smi srotasām asmi jāhnavī ||*

पवनः *pavanaḥ* the wind पवताम् *pavatāṁ* among purifiers अस्मि *asmi* (I) am रामः *rāmaḥ* Rama शस्त्रभृताम् *śastra bhṛtāṁ* among wielders of weapons (warriors) अहम् *ahaṁ* I झषाणाम् *jhaṣāṇāṁ* among fishes मकरः *makaraḥ* Makara (shark) च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am स्रोतसाम् *srotasāṁ* among streams अस्मि *asmi* (I) am जाह्नवी *jāhnavī* the Ganges

**Of purifiers I am the wind; of the wielders of weapon I am Rama. Of fishes I am the shark, and of rivers I am the Ganges. 31**

All the four elements—earth, water, fire and air—are in fact purifiers. Among them air is all pervading and doing this great work very effectively. It is capable of purifying earth, water and fire too. It makes fire burn; it converts impure water into vapour and reinstates it as pure rain water. The smell produced by earth and earthly things is purified and made smell-less by air. The glory of the Lord reveals itself through this great purifier.

Unarmed countries and under-armed countries are exposed to intrusion and invasion. In this

of this urge in beings It is not to be condemned as base but revered as divine in origin The Lord puts it to us that this urge is His divine attribute.

The serpent is a venomous creature. All the same it is associated with Iswara in all of His forms It is the symbol of Sakti, the Cosmic Energy. In man the dormant power is called the Kundalini Sakti or the coiled up energy symbolized as serpent power. Happiness and misery, life and death are both expressions of energy The negative expression is the poison in the snake Vasuki the poisonous snake was utilized as the rope to rotate the Mount Meru in the act of churning the ocean. The Lord speaks of this snake as His own energy.

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितॄणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥ २९

अन्-अन्त च अस्-मि नागानाम् वरुण यादसाम् अहम् ।
पितृणाम् अर्यमा च अस्-मि यम सम्-यमताम् अहम् ॥

*anantas cā 'smi nāgānām varuno yādasām aham* ।
*pitṛnām aryamā cā 'smi yamaḥ samyamatām aham* ॥

अनन्त *anantah* Ananta च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am नागानाम् *nāgānām* among Nagas वरुण *varunah* Varuna यादसाम् *yādasām* among water-deities अहम् *aham* I पितृणाम् *pitṛnām* among the Pitrus or ancestors अर्यमा *aryamā* Aryama च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am यम *yamah* Yama संयमताम् *samyamatām* among governors अहम् *aham* I

**Of the Nagas I am Ananta; of the water-deities I am Varuna. Of the Pitrus I am Aryama; of controllers I am Yama.** 29

*sargāṇām ādir antaś ca madhyaṁ cai 'vā 'ham arjuna |*
*adhyātmavidyā vidyānāṁ vādaḥ pravadatām aham ||*

सर्गाणाम् *sargāṇāṁ* among creations आदिः *ādiḥ* the beginning अन्तः *antaḥ* the end च *ca* and मध्यम् *madhyaṁ* the middle च *ca* and एव *eva* also अहम् *ahaṁ* I अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna अध्यात्मविद्या *adhyātma vidyā* the science of Self विद्यानाम् *vidyānāṁ* among sciences वादः *vādaḥ* logic प्रवदताम् *pravadatāṁ* among controversialists अहम् *ahaṁ* I

**Of created things I am the beginning and the end and also the middle, O Arjuna. Of the sciences I am the science of the Self; of those who debate I am the reason.** 32

In the twentieth stanza of this chapter the Lord states that He is the beginning, the middle and also the end of beings. Here He states that the same is the case in regard to the elements as well. While making an ornament, while maintaining it as such and while melting it back to the original state, gold the material cause of it, remains ever the same. In this way Iswara the root cause of the universe is ever Himself even while projecting and preserving it.

The science of the Self is *Atma vidyā* or *Brahma vidyā*. Ignorance vanishes when Brahman is known. The delusion of birth and death disappears; all problems get solved. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. There is no science superior to this. The Lord is Himself this *Atma vidyā*.

Reason is the most useful instrument possessed by man for enquiry into the real and the non-real, into truth and its opposite. Brushing aside all

*prahlādaś cā 'smi daityānām kālaḥ kalayatām aham |*
*mṛgāṇām ca mṛgendro 'ham vainateyaś ca pakṣiṇām ||*

प्रह्लादः *prahlādaḥ* Prahlada च *ca* and अस्मि *asmi* (I) am दैत्यानाम् *daityānāṁ* among Daityas कालः *kālaḥ* time कलयताम् *kalayatāṁ* among reckoners अहम् *ahaṁ* I मृगाणाम् *mṛgāṇāṁ* among beasts च *ca* and मृगेन्द्रः *mṛgendraḥ* the lord of beasts (lion) अहम् *aham* I वैनतेयः *vainateyaḥ* son of Vinata, Garuda च *ca* and पक्षिणाम् *pakṣiṇām* among birds

**Of the Daityas I am Prahlada and of reckoners I am Time; of beasts I am the lord of beasts, and Vainateya of birds. 30**

The Daityas were the sworn enemies of the Devas. Prahlada was the son of Hiranyakasipu, the king of those Titans. From birth onwards Prahlada showed extreme devotion to the Lord Vishnu, which act of his ran counter to the plan and design of his father. Prahlada is the model of the Bhaktas. Proof is found in him of the fact that great ones are sometimes born of the low. It is befitting that he is an attribute of Iswara.

Time is the great and unfailing recorder of the appearance, stay and disappearance of the things and beings in the universe. That it is identified with Iswara is therefore appropriate.

The lion is the lord of beasts. He is majestic and magnanimous in his own way. Because of his prowess he has become the vehicle of the Cosmic Mother. The glory of the Lord does indeed reveal itself in this beast.

means word and its meaning. The homogeneous sum total of the sound in the Cosmos is "Om." The very first phase of this monosyllable is the letter A, the modifications of which form the other letters. In all languages A is the first letter and it is rightly equated with Brahman.

Word-compounds in Samskrit conform to certain principles. While compounding themselves when two words retain equal importance they are called the dual or dvandva. For example, Rama and Krishna together form Ramakrishnau, both the personalities maintaining their individualities.

A moment, an hour, a day, a year—divisions of time such as these have their beginnings and ends. But time in itself is beginningless and endless, and it is equated with God who is called *Mahākāla*.

The Lord Himself has become the multitudinous beings, each of them enjoying the fruits of its own karma. In this way the Lord is the Dispenser. Because of His being present everywhere as the countless individualities, He is termed as facing everywhere. This fact is self-evident in Nature.

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहं उद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।
कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥ ३४

मृत्युः सर्व-हरः च अहम् उद्-भवः च भवि-ष्यताम् ।
कीर्तिः श्रीः वाक् च नारीणाम् स्मृतिः मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥

*mṛtyuḥ sarvaharaś cā 'ham udbhavaś ca bhaviṣyatām*
*kīrtiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīṇāṁ smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā*

मृत्युः *mṛtyuḥ* death सर्वहरः *sarvaharaḥ* all-devouring च *ca* and अहम् *ahaṁ* I उद्भवः *udbhavaḥ* the prosperity च

respect Rama has a lesson to teach to countries and governments Weapon is a power for good or for bad Rama's weapon was the deadliest in those days, but he never abused it Evil would have ensued if he had ever abused it Whenever he put his weapon to action, good only came out of it To be well armed and to make good and timely use of the arm is the lesson that Rama teaches kings and rulers *Any deviation from his teaching is not for* public safety Rama is an Incarnation of God, and Krishna identifies Himself with Him

Among fishes the shark is most powerful It has derived that power from God's cosmic energy.

Ganges is also known as Jahnavi because of her having become the daughter of the sage Jahnu. When Bhagiratha was escorting the Ganga, she inundated the sacrificial field of the sage Jahnu, who became annoyed at her intrusion and swallowed her up But at the supplication of Bhagiratha the sage permitted the river to come out of his ear That way she became Jahnavi Among rivers Ganges is the most sacred Her water bottled for any length of time does not putrefy She is venerated as having come from the head of Siva Many saints and sages have performed austerity *on the banks of this river* She has a sanctifying influence on the *sadhakas* This divinity in her is derived from the Lord

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ ३२

सर्गाणाम् आदि अन्त च मध्यम् च एव अहम् अर्जुन ।
अध्यात्म-विद्या विद्यानाम् वाद प्र वद्-अताम् अहम् ॥

*bṛhatsāma tathā sāmnāṁ gāyatrī chandasām aham |*
*māsānāṁ mārgaśīrṣo 'ham ṛtūnāṁ kusumākaraḥ ||*

बृहत्साम *bṛhatsāma* Brihatsama तथा *tathā* also साम्नाम् *sāmnāṁ* among Sama hymns गायत्री *gāyatrī* Gayatri छन्दसाम् *chandasāṁ* among metres अहम् *ahaṁ* I मासानाम् *māsānāṁ* among months मार्गशीर्षः *mārgaśīrṣaḥ* Margasirsha अहम् *ahaṁ* I ऋतूनाम् *ṛtūnāṁ* among seasons कुसुमाकरः *kusumākaraḥ* the flowery season

**Of the Saman hymns I am the Brihat-Saman; of metres I am Gayatri. Of months I am Margasirsha and of seasons I am the flowery spring. 35**

Music is one of the means to approach God. Among the Vedas, the Saman abounds with hymns set to music. Both Siva and Narayana are said to be very fond of the Saman hymns. Ravana the Demon pleased Siva by singing the Saman. In this Veda again that portion known as the Brihat-Saman is the best. The combination of music and sublime matter have made it so.

Metre is characteristic of poetry. The Vedas contain various types of metres, the Gayatri metre among them being the foremost. Adoration to the several Deities comes in the forms of their respective Gayatri. The Devi Gayatri, the Rudra Gayatri, the Brahma Gayatri, the Paramahamsa Gayatri and several other Gayatris may be found in the Vedas.

There is a special merit in the month of Margasirsha. The time before the sun-rise is called the *Brāhma-muhūrtam*, the most favourable time for spiritual practices. An earthly year is a day for the Devas. Margasirsha is the month in December-

prejudices and predispositions, if reason be faithfully followed it takes the inquirer up to the gateway of intuition Pure reason is a glory come from God.

Know the One that is the root of everything Then truth becomes self-evident to you Put the number one first and then add the zeros to it, this done, the zeros have their value Without the number one, they are valueless The many get their values from the original number one Iswara is the number one, the universe and the beings are the zeros appended to it

— Sri Ramakrishna

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३

अ-क्षराणाम् अकारः अस्-मि द्वन्द्व सामासिकस्य च ।
अहम् एव अ-क्षय काल॰ धाता अहम् विश्वत-मुखः ॥

*aksarānām akāro 'smi dvandvah sāmāsikasya ca* ।
*aham evā 'ksayah kālo dhātā 'ham visvatomukhah* ॥

अक्षराणाम् *aksarānām* among letters अकार *akārah* the letter A अस्मि *asmi* (I) am द्वन्द्व *dvandvah* the dual सामासिकस्य *sāmāsikasya* among all compounds च *ca* and अहम् *aham* I एव *eva* verily अक्षय *aksayah* the inexhaustible or everlasting काल *kālah* time धाता *dhātā* the dispenser अहम् *aham* I विश्वतोमुख *visvatomukhah* the all-faced

**Of letters I am the letter A, and of word-compounds I am the dual (Dvandva). I am verily the inexhaustible Time. I am the Dispenser facing everywhere.** 33

Brahman, the Unmanifest Reality, manifests Itself as *Nāda Brahman* or Sound Reality. The universe is the gross manifestation of Sound Reality. A thing in the world is called *pada-artha* which

approve some forms of gambling as lawful. Betting for example on horses in a race is accepted as lawful. Gambling with dice was approved as legal during the Mahabharata days. Deceptions other than the approved gambling cannot be openly practised. In an open assembly Pandavas and Kauravas gambled with dice in which they staked their empire and everything else.

Some forms of gambling require the use of intelligence on which their success depends. Intelligence in all forms comes from Iswara. As the light of a lamp is equally useful for forgery and for pious reading, the discernment derived from the Cosmic Intelligence is available both for noble and ignoble purposes. As the light of the lamp is not in anyway affected by the abuse the forgerer makes of it, the Cosmic Intelligence which is the Lord is not tainted by the misuse the gambler makes of It. His intelligence also gets its light from the Cosmic Intelligence. This fact is explained by the Lord.

*Tejas* is the original word for splendour. The brightness that is evident on the physique as a result of excellent health, sense-control and continence is termed as *Tejas*. Victory consists of the elimination of the bad and the establishment of the good.

*Vyavasāya* is effort to execute the good and useful undertaking with all perseverance. It leads to noble and great achievements. It is effort again that takes man to the presence of the Lord.

*Sattva* is here spoken of as the good. Though all the three Gunas are the constituents of the

*ca* and भविष्यताम् *bhaviṣyatām* of those who are to be prosperous कीर्तिः *kīrtiḥ* fame श्रीः *śrīḥ* prosperity वाक् *vāk* speech च *ca* and नारीणाम् *nārīṇām* of the feminine स्मृतिः *smṛtiḥ* the memory मेधा *medhā* intelligence धृतिः *dhṛtiḥ* firmness क्षमा *kṣamā* forgiveness

**And I am the all-devouring Death. I am the prosperity of those who are to be prosperous; and of female qualities I am Fame, Fortune, Speech, Memory, Intelligence, Constancy and Forbearance. 34**

Life and death are the obverse and reverse of existence. To the born, death is certain. The Lord is as much the force of destruction as He is of creation.

As the rain-bearing clouds are attracted to the verdure of forests, the grace of the Lord in the form of prosperity comes to those who have made themselves worthy of it.

Fame, fortune, speech, memory, intelligence, constancy and forbearance are termed female qualities because of their grace and tenderness. Wherever these excellences are found in exuberance, there the presence of the divine is prominent.

It is the Cosmic Mother that reveals Brahman. Without the *Vidya maya* or revealing power of the Mother, who can comprehend Brahman? Without knowing the *Sakti*, Iswara cannot be known.

—Sri Ramakrishna

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहं ऋतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥ ३५

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नाम् गायत्री छन्दस्-आम् अहम् ।
मासानाम् मार्गशीर्षः अहम् ऋतूनाम् कुसुम-आकरः ॥

A Muni is he who turns his mind within and realizes divinity there. The sage Vyasa is one who has in this way become a perfect *Jnani*. He is also renowned as Veda Vyasa and Badarayana. Yet other names by which he is distinguished are Dvaipayana and Krishna-dvaipayana. This last name came to him because of his dark complexion. He was born of Satyavati to Parasara. The Vedas were compiled by him and the Vedanta Sutras composed by him. The Mahabharata and the eighteen celebrated Puranas were all written by him. He is the father of Suka, the born *Brahma-Jnani*. It is no wonder he is viewed as an incarnation of Vishnu.

He who had an intuitive knowledge of things was a *Kavi* according to the ancient lore. But latterly a poet is called *Kavi*. Usana Kavi was a famous figure. He was also known as Sukra. He had the psychic power to bring the dead to life. Because of the training he imparted to the Asuras, they became very powerful.

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ ३८

दण्डः दमयताम् अस्-मि नी-तिः अस्-मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनम् च एव अस्-मि गुह्-यानाम् ज्ञानम् ज्ञा-न-वताम् अहम् ॥

*daṇḍo damayatāṁ asmi nītir asmi jigīṣatām* ।
*maunaṁ cai 'vā 'smi guhyānāṁ jñānaṁ jñānavatām aham* ॥

दण्डः *daṇḍaḥ* the sceptre दमयताम् *damayatāṁ* among punishers अस्मि *asmi* (I) am नीतिः *nītiḥ* statesmanship अस्मि *asmi* (I) am जिगीषताम् *jigīṣatāṁ* among those who

January in which the *Brāhma-muhūrtam* is contained. The worship of God done in this month has a salutary effect on the mind. The Lord therefore extols this month as a special attribute of His.

The life of the vegetable kingdom and that of the others too to some extent, get suspended in the snowy winter; but in the spring they get reanimated. Men and beings beam with fresh life and activities. So the Lord describes Himself as the Vasanta or the flowery spring among the seasons.

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३६

द्यूतम् छलयताम् अस्-मि तेजः तेजस्-विनाम् अहम् ।
जयः अस्-मि वि-अव-साय. अस्-मि सद्-त्वम् सत्त्व-वताम् अहम् ॥

*dyūtam chalayatām asmi tejas tejasvinām aham* ।
*jayo 'smi vyavasāyo 'smi sattvam sattvavatām aham* ॥

द्यूतम् *dyūtaṁ* the gambling छलयताम् *chalayatāṁ* of the fraudulent अस्मि *asmi* (I) am तेजः *tejaḥ* splendour तेजस्विनाम् *tejasvināṁ* of the splendid अहम् *ahaṁ* I जयः *jayaḥ* victory अस्मि *asmi* (I) am व्यवसाय: *vyavasāyaḥ* effort अस्मि *asmi* (I) am सत्त्वम् *sattvam* the goodness सत्त्ववताम् *sattvavatāṁ* of the good अहम् *aham* I

**I am the gambling of the fraudulent, I am the splendour of the splendid; I am victory; I am effort; I am the goodness of the good.** 36

Robbery, forgery, fixing undue price on things, passing imitation articles as genuine—acts of these kinds are all fraudulent. Gambling also comes under this category. But peoples and governments

other considerations. God-knowledge remains a secret to the majority not because of any narrow outlook on the part of those who have had God-realization, but because of this science being open to those only who are pure in heart and who have a thirst for sacred knowledge.

Nature is ever in vibration, and whatever vibrates produces sound. Silence is not therefore in Nature. Brahman is motionless; no vibration takes place in Him. Silence and Brahman are one and the same. To the knowers of Brahman nothing is more eloquent and public than Brahman. To the ignorant nothing is more secret and hidden than Brahman.

The universe is where there is the triad of the knower, the knowledge and the object known. When the process of knowing is directed on the knower it becomes *Atma vidyā*. Here the subject and object become one. Referring to this Self-knowledge the Lord says "I am the wisdom of the wise."

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान् मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ ३९

यत् च अपि सर्व-भू-तानाम् बीजम् तत् अहम् अर्जुन ।
न तत् अस्-ति विना यत् (अ)स्-यात् मया भू-तम् चर-अचरम् ॥

*yac cā 'pi sarvabhūtānāṁ bījaṁ tad aham arjuna* ।
*na tad asti vinā yat syān mayā bhūtaṁ carācaram* ॥

यत् *yat* which च *ca* and अपि *api* also सर्वभूतानाम् *sarva bhūtānāṁ* among all beings बीजम् *bījaṁ* seed तत् *tat* that अहम् *ahaṁ* I अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna न *na* not तत् *tat* that अस्ति *asti* is विना *vinā* without यत् *yat*

*Prakriti*, the *sattva* alone among them takes one Godward.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ ३७

वृष्णीनाम् वासुदेवः अस्-मि पाण्डवानाम् धनम्-जयः ।
मुनीनाम् अपि अहम् वि-आसः कवीनाम् उशना कविः ॥

*vṛṣṇīnām vāsudevo 'smi pāṇḍavānāṁ dhanaṁjayaḥ* ।
*munīnām apy ahaṁ vyāsaḥ kavīnām uśanā kaviḥ* ॥

वृष्णीनाम् *vṛṣṇīnāṁ* among the Vrishnis वासुदेवः *vāsu devaḥ* Vasudeva अस्मि *asmi* (I) am पाण्डवानाम् *pāṇḍavānāṁ* among the Pandavas धनंजयः *dhanaṁjayaḥ* Dhananjaya मुनीनाम् *munīnām* among the Munis अपि *api* also अहम् *aham* I व्यासः *vyāsaḥ* Vyasa कवीनाम् *kavīnām* among poets उशना *uśanā* Usana कविः *kaviḥ* the poet

**Of the Vrishnis I am Vasudeva; of the Pandavas, Dhananjaya; of the sages I am Vyasa and of the seers I am Usana the seer. 37**

The Yadavas had come of Vrishni race; so they were called Vrishnis. Krishna was the son of Vasudeva and so He is called *Vāsudeva*. That He is the best among the Yadavas is evident.

Arjuna is called Dhananjaya because he had claimed the hoarded up treasures of several kings and utilized them all for good purposes. There is a purpose in the Lord saying that He is Arjuna and not Yudhishthira among the Pandavas. He reminds Arjuna that he has no individuality apart from the Lord. This is the position of all the beings. When man comes to know of it, he would be rid of conceit and self-importance.

in all is pointed out by the Lord. The *sadhaka* cognizes God alone everywhere as he pursues the spiritual path. The act of seeking God evolves into seeing God.

Who can know Iswara in His entirety? That power and privilege are not given to us. Again, it is not necessary that we know His infinitude. As our understanding permits, it is enough if we know Him alone to be the Real. Let it be supposed that one wants to see the Ganges and have a holy dip in it. Plodding along from Gangotri to Gangasagar, that is from the source to the estuary, need not be gone through. Contact with this sacred river at any convenient spot serves the purpose.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How does the knower of God view the world? It is explained :—

**The Essence of the Vibhutis — 41-42**

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंशसंभवम् ॥ ४१

यत् यत् वि-भू-ति-मत् सत्त्वम् श्रीमत् ऊर्जितम् एव वा ।
तत् तत् एव अव-गच्छ त्वम् , मम तेजः-अंश-सम्-भवम् ॥

*yad-yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā |*
*tat-tad evā 'vagaccha tvaṁ mama tejoṁśasaṁbhavam ||*

यद्यत् *yad-yat* whatever विभूतिमत् *vibhūtimat* glorious सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* being श्रीमत् *śrīmat* prosperous ऊर्जितम् *ūrjitaṁ* powerful एव *eva* also वा *vā* or तत्तत् *tat-tat* that एव *eva* only अवगच्छ *avagaccha* know त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou मम *mama* my तेजः अंश संभवम् *tejaḥ aṁśa saṁbhavaṁ* manifestation of a part of the splendour

**Whatever being there is glorious, prosperous or powerful, know that to have sprung but from a spark of My splendour.** **41**

seek victory मौनम् *maunaṁ* silence च *ca* and एव *eva* also अस्मि *asmi* (I) am गुह्यानाम् *guhyānām* among secrets ज्ञानम् *jñānam* the knowledge ज्ञानवताम् *jñānavatām* among the knowers अहम् *aham* I

**Of punishers I am the sceptre; of those that seek victory I am statesmanship; and of secrets I am also silence; and I am the wisdom of the wise. 38**

The duty of the monarch is to mete out just punishment to the offender. The sceptre is the symbol of the measured punishment and justice. This done, the accused himself feels that he has been justly handled. Not only does this act reform the convict, but it is also a lesson to the common man. Punishment is therefore the grace of the Lord come in this shape. It may be mentioned here that diseases and ailments are the punishments awarded by Nature for known and unknown irregularities in life. Not only does Iswara function as Yama, He also functions as the sceptre.

*Neeti* is rendered here as statesmanship. Right attitude, right relationship and right proceedings are all born of *Neeti*. Any victory won by wrong method will not be lasting; it will only lead to new complications. Noble means alone lead to noble ends. Adoption of sound policy in mutual relationship is statesmanship. Such a policy savours of divinity.

Secret is that which is not divulged to the others for valid reasons. The technic of harnessing certain resources of nature is kept secret for the exclusive advantage of the concerned few. The hidden powers of Nature are kept secret by others for some

*ekāṁśena* by one part स्थित: *sthitaḥ* exist जगत् *jagat* the world

**But what need is there, O Arjuna, for this detailed knowledge? I stand supporting the whole universe with a single fragment of Myself.** **42**

An expert cannot display all his talents when tied into a gunny bag and made to run. Though the Lord reveals Himself in multi-forms, these revelations are but partial. All manifestations are in fact limitations. The waves are mere insignificant aspects of the ocean. Even so the infinite phenomenal expressions of Iswara are all just a negligible speck in His magnitude. When this itself is unfathomable, what to speak of Him as the Unmanifest!

God is with form, without form and also transcending all these. He alone knows who and what He is.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे विभूतियोगो नाम
दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde vibhūti yogo nāma daśamo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the tenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS

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which स्यात् *syāt* may be मया *mayā* by me भूतम् *bhūtam* being चराचरम् *carācaram* moving or unmoving

**And whatever is the seed of all beings, that am I, O Arjuna. There is no being, whether moving or unmoving that can exist without Me. 39**

It may be summed up that the varieties of existences, at all levels, the moving and the unmoving have all taken their source in Brahman

Has the Lord exhausted the account of His divine attributes? He gives the answer —

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४०

न अन्त अस् ति मम दिव्-यानाम् वि-भू-तीनाम् परम्-तप ।
एष तु उद्-देशत प्र उक्त वि-भूते वि स्तर मया ॥

*nā 'nto 'sti mama divyānām vibhūtīnām paramtapa* ।
*esa tū 'ddeśataḥ prokto vibhūter vistaro mayā* ॥

न *na* not अन्त *antaḥ* end अस्ति *asti* is मम *mama* my दिव्यानाम् *divyānām* of divine विभूतीनाम् *vibhūtīnām* glories परंतप *paramtapa* O Parantapa एष *esa* this तु *tu* indeed उद्देशत *uddeśatah* brief statement प्रोक्त *proktaḥ* has been stated विभूते *vibhūteḥ* of glory विस्तर *vistarah* particulars मया *mayā* by me

**There is no end of My divine manifestations, O harasser of foes; this is only a brief exposition by Me of the extent of My glories. 40**

The mother hen puts the chicks in the way of helping themselves to grains of food The young ones catch the process and continue to feed themselves Likewise the way of recognizing the Divinity

The Lord made it clear to Arjuna that it is just with an infinitesimal fraction of His Entirety that He has become the manifested universe and that His unmanifest Reality is immeasurable. Based on this truth Arjuna has revised his conceptions about himself, about the world, about his relationship with the world and about his duty. He has thus been delivered from delusion.

Moreover ;—

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २

भव-अप्ययौ हि भूतानाम् श्रु-तौ विस्तर-शः मया ।
त्वद्-तः कमल-पत्र-अक्ष माहात्म्यम् अपि च अ-व्ययम् ॥

*bhavāpyayau hi bhūtānāṁ śrutau vistaraśo mayā |*
*tvattaḥ kamalapatrākṣa māhātmyam api cā 'vyayam ||*

भवाप्ययौ *bhavāpyayau* the origin and dissolution हि *hi* indeed भूतानाम् *bhūtānāṁ* of beings श्रुतौ *śrutau* have been heard विस्तरशः *vistaraśaḥ* in detail मया *mayā* by me त्वत्तः *tvattaḥ* from thee कमल पत्र अक्ष *kamala patra akṣa* O Lotus eyed माहात्म्यम् *māhātmyaṁ* greatness अपि *api* also च *ca* and अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* inexhaustible

**From You, O Lotus-eyed, have been heard by me in detail of the origin and dissolution of beings and also of Your inexhaustible greatness. 2**

The dilatation made by the Lord is brief from His own standpoint and it is elaborate from the standpoint of Arjuna. Each of them is in this respect, a standard for himself.

The sun's ray spreads everywhere and reveals things in their true perspective. The revealing light here is different from the things revealed. But God is Self-revealed. He manifests Himself as everything. As glory, as brilliance, as splendour, as beauty, as power and as so many other divine attributes, He is expressing Himself. Whatever catches our imagination, draws our attention, sends us into raptures and infuses bliss into us, that is none but the glory of God.

Do you know what is meant by Brahman with divine attributes? It is like a vast expanse of water with waves, ripples, billows, bubbles, sprays, froths and so on Forms appearing in Cit-akasa or the Expanse of Consciousness can be experienced. Even the Incarnations of God come within this category.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is it to be inferred then that the sum total of the manifested universe and God are one and the same? The Lord clarifies this point.—

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नं एकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२

अथवा बहुना एतेन किम् ज्ञा-तेन तव अर्जुन ।
विष्टभ्य अहम् इदम् कृत्स्नम् एक-अंशेन स्थितः जगत् ॥

*athavā bahunai 'tena kiṁ jñātena tavā 'rjuna* ।
*viṣṭabhyā 'ham idam kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat* ॥

अथवा *athavā* or बहुना *bahunā* (by) many एतेन *etena* (by) this किम् *kim* what ज्ञातेन *jñātena* known तव *tava* of thee अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna विष्टभ्य *viṣṭabhya* supporting अहम् *aham* I इदम् *idam* this कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnam* all एकांशेन

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ ४

मन्-य-से यदि तत् शक्यम् मया द्रष्टुम् इति प्रभो ।
योग-ईश्-वर ततः मे त्वम् दर्शि-अय आत्मानम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*manyase yadi tac chakyaṁ mayā draṣṭum iti prabho |*
*yogeśvara tato me tvaṁ darśayā 'tmānam avyayam ||*

मन्यसे *manyase* thou thinkest यदि *yadi* if तत् *tat* that शक्यम् *śakyaṁ* possible मया *mayā* by me द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭuṁ* to see इति *iti* thus प्रभो *prabho* O Lord योगेश्वर *yogeśvara* O Lord of yogis ततः *tataḥ* then मे *me* me त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou दर्शय *darśaya* show आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* (thy) self अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* imperishable

**If You, O Lord, think it possible for me to see it, then do, O Lord of yoga, show me your Eternal Self. 4**

Not only does yoga emanate from Iswara, but He is also the bestower of it on worthy aspirants. Creating; protecting, withdrawing, veiling and revealing — these are the five divine activities which the Lord is pleased to carry on eternally. Among these five, the glory of the Cosmic revelation it is that Arjuna supplicates to have a glimpse of. The granting of the spiritual vision is an act of grace that comes from the Yogeswara.

To give prominence to personal will is not the way of the Bhakta. He subordinates self-will to the will of the Lord. Consistent with this attitude, Arjuna pleads that the vision of the Cosmic Form of Iswara might be granted to him if the Lord thought he was worthy of it.

# विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः

## VISVARUPA DARSANA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF THE VISION OF THE COSMIC FORM

## CHAPTER XI

Arjuna's Supplication—The Divine Eye—Iswara's Cosmic Form—The Cosmic Vision Defined—The Lord Embodied as Time—Arjuna Praises the Lord—Arjuna Pleads for the Vision of Gentle Form—Arjuna's Blessed Privilege—The Wonted Serene Form—The Message of the Cosmic Form

### Arjuna's Supplication — 1-4

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ १

मद्-अनु-ग्रहाय परमम् गुह्यम् अधि आत्म सम्-ज्ञितम् ।
यत् त्वया (वच्) उच-तम् वच तेन मोहः अयम् वि-गम्-तः मम ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*madanugrahāya paramaṁ guhyam adhyātmasamjñitam*
*yat tvayo 'ktam vacas tena moho 'yam vigato mama* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

मदनुग्रहाय *mad anugrahāya* out of compassion towards me परमम् *paramam* the highest गुह्यम् *guhyaṁ* the secret अध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् *adhyātma samjñitam* Adhyatma named यत् *yat* which त्वया *tvayā* by thee उक्तम् *uktam* spoken वचः *vacaḥ* word तेन *tena* by that मोहः *mohaḥ* delusion अयम् *ayaṁ* this विगतः *vigataḥ* gone मम *mama* my

**Arjuna said:**

**By this profound discourse concerning the Self, which You have delivered out of compassion for me, my delusion has been dispelled. 1**

By asking Arjuna to behold His macrocosmic form, the Lord recognizes his worthiness for that holy communion.

It is Narayana who has become the all. Man is Narayana; all creatures are Narayana; the Rishi is Narayana, the wicked man is Narayana; whatever is, is Narayana. Narayana sports in multiforms, displaying His glory in all these forms.

— Sri Ramakrishna

पश्यादित्यान्वसून्रुद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ ६

पश्य आदित्यान् वसून् रुद्रान् अश्विनौ मरुतः तथा ।
बहूनि अ-दृष्ट-पूर्वाणि पश्य आश्चर्याणि भारत ॥

*paśyā 'dityān vasūn rudrān aśvinau marutas tathā |*
*bahūny adṛṣṭapūrvāṇi paśyā 'ścaryāṇi bhārata ||*

पश्य *paśya* behold आदित्यान् *ādityān* the Adityas वसून् *vasūn* the Vasus रुद्रान् *rudrān* the Rudras अश्विनौ *aśvinau* the (two) Aswins मरुतः *marutaḥ* the Maruts तथा *tathā* also बहूनि *bahūni* many अदृष्टपूर्वाणि *adṛṣṭapūrvāṇi* never seen before पश्य *paśya* see आश्चर्याणि *āścaryāṇi* wonders भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the two Aswins and also the Maruts. Behold, O Bharata, many marvels never seen before. 6**

The manifest aspect of Iswara is finite compared with His unmanifest infinitude. But even this seemingly finite aspect expands into infinitude to the inquirer who seeks to probe into it. The stupendousness of the solar systems or of the stellar systems, the subtlety in the structure of the atom receding

Iswara is the source of the universe. But on this ground He is not entangled. The working of the universe derives its design and process from the Lord. He suffers no mutation on this account. It is all His glory.

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ ३

एवम् एतत् यथा आत्थ त्वम् आत्मानम् परम-ईश्वर ।
द्रष्टुम् इच्छामि ते रूपम् ऐश्वरम् पुरुष-उत्तम ॥

*evam etad yathā 'ttha tvam ātmānaṁ parameśvara* ।
*draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpam aiśvaraṁ puruṣottama* ॥

एवम् *evaṁ* thus एतत् *etat* this यथा *yathā* as आत्थ *āttha* hast declared त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* thyself परमेश्वर *parameśvara* O Supreme Lord द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭum* to see इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) desire ते *te* thy रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form ऐश्वरम् *aiśvaraṁ* sovereign पुरुषोत्तम *puru-ṣottama* O Purusha Supreme

**As You have declared Yourself to be, so it is, O Lord Supreme. (Yet) I desire to see Your Iswara form, O Purushottama. 3**

Divine attributes are inherent in Iswara. As brilliance cannot be separated from burning fire divine excellences cannot be effaced from Him. Outstanding features such as knowledge, lordship, strength, potency, heroism and brilliance may be easily marked in Him. There are hidden glories which may be cognized only when He condescends to reveal. Arjuna supplicates for a vision of His latent glories.

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ ८

न तु माम् शक्-य-से द्रष्टुम् अनेन एव स्व-चक्षुषा ।
दिव्यम् ददा-मि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगम् ऐश्वरम् ॥

*na tu māṁ śakyase draṣṭum anenai 'va svacakṣuṣā* ।
*divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ paśya me yogam aiśvaram* ॥

न *na* not तु *tu* but माम् *māṁ* me शक्यसे *śakyase* (thou) canst द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭuṁ* to see अनेन *anena* with this एव *eva* even स्वचक्षुषा *svacakṣuṣā* with own eyes दिव्यम् *divyaṁ* divine ददामि *dadāmi* (I) give ते *te* (to) thee चक्षुः *cakṣuḥ* the eye पश्य *paśya* behold मे *me* my योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga ऐश्वरम् *aiśvaraṁ* lordly

**But you cannot see Me with these eyes of yours; I give you divine sight; behold My Supreme Yoga. 8**

In the scheme of the evolution of life, one species evolves into another until perfection in body and mind is reached in the human. Nothing in Nature can be found parallel to the human tabernacle, the human brain and the human mind. Man is a repository of knowledge. He has added marvellously and continues to add to his knowledge of things in Nature. He is correspondingly gaining mastery over everything in it to an enormous extent. Human-contrived aids to sense-knowledge, such as the telescope, the microscope, the X-ray and the stethoscope are equally marvellous. But the seeming mastery over Nature has not minimized his proneness to misery; it has in a way aggravated it. His enormously increased intellectual knowledge has

The Lord's response comes as follows :—

**The Divine Eye — 5-8**

श्री भगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥ ५

पश्-अ मे पार्थ रूपाणि शत-शः अथ सहस्र-शः ।
नाना-विधानि दिव्-यानि नाना-वर्ण-आ-कृ-तीनि च ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*paśya me pārtha rūpāni śataśo 'tha sahasraśaḥ* ।
*nānāvidhāni divyāni nānāvarnākṛtīni ca* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

पश्य *paśya* behold मे *me* my पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha रूपाणि *rūpāṇi* forms शतशः *śataśaḥ* by hundreds अथ *atha* and सहस्रशः *sahasraśaḥ* by thousands नानाविधानि *nānā vidhāni* of different sorts दिव्यानि *divyāni* divine नानावर्ण आकृतीनि *nānāvarna ākṛtīni* of various colours and shapes च *ca* and

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Behold My forms, O Partha, by hundreds and thousands, manifold and divine and of multi-colours and shapes. 5**

Things and beings seemingly extraneous to Iswara are not so in fact. Naught exists outside the pale of the Lord. Offshoots as they are of His immensity, the divine element is in one and all of them. It is going to be revealed shortly that the diversities in form, colour, nature and existence are all really the manifestations of the Cosmic Entity who is one without a second.

aspects. By the grace of this sage, Sanjaya is favoured with the same Cosmic Vision which Arjuna gets and he faithfully reports it to his blind monarch Dhrtarashtra.

The great ones compare *Bhakti* with the magic collyrium applied to the eye. Sreemati Radha once told her companion maids that she saw Sri Krishna only wherever she turned her eyes. "You have anointed your eyes with the divine collyrium of *Bhakti*; therefore you behold your darling Krishna in this way," answered the companions.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**Iswara's Cosmic Form — 9-14**

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ ९

एवम् उक्त्वा ततः राजन् महा-योग-ईश्वरः हरिः ।
दर्शि-अयामास पार्थाय परमम् रूपम् ऐश्वरम् ॥

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*evam uktvā tato rājan mahāyogeśvaro hariḥ* ।
*darśayām āsa pārthāya paramaṁ rūpam aiśvaram* ॥

संजय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

एवम् *evaṁ* thus उक्त्वा *uktvā* having spoken ततः *tataḥ* then राजन् *rājan* O king महायोगेश्वरः *mahā yogeśvaraḥ* the great Lord of yoga हरिः *hariḥ* Hari दर्शयामास *darśayāmāsa* showed पार्थाय *pārthāya* to Partha परमम् *paramaṁ* supreme रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form ऐश्वरम् *aiśvaraṁ* sovereign

**Sanjaya said:**

**Having thus spoken, O King, the great Lord of yoga, Hari showed to Partha, His supreme Iswara-form. 9**

into infinitude — these are sufficient data to make man stand aghast at the structure of the universe which is ever available for observation

Furthermore :—

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ७

इह एक-स्थम् जगत् कृत्स्नम् पश्य अद्य स चर-अचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाका ईश यत् च अन्यत् द्रष्टुम् इच्छ सि ॥

*ihai 'kastham jagat kṛtsnam paśyā 'dya sacarācaram* ।
*mama dehe gudākeśa yac cā 'nyad draṣṭum icchasi* ॥

इह *iha* in this एकस्थम् *ekastham* centred in one जगत् *jagat* the universe कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnam* whole पश्य *paśya* behold अद्य *adya* now सचराचरम् *sacarācaram* with the moving and the unmoving मम *mama* my देहे *dehe* in the body गुडाकेश *gudākeśa* O Gudakesa यत् *yat* that च *ca* and अन्यत् *anyat* other द्रष्टुम् *drastum* to see इच्छसि *icchasi* (thou) desirest

**Behold here today, O Gudakesa, the whole universe of the moving and the unmoving, and whatever else you desire to see, all integral of My body. 7**

In chapter 2 stanza 6, Arjuna raised a doubt whether Pandavas should vanquish Kauravas or Kauravas should vanquish Pandavas The answer to this question can now be found self-revealed in the working of the Cosmos The plan and purpose of the universe ever stand self-revealed. It is open to the enquirer to get at them whenever he wants.

Are the physical eyes and the ordinary intellect sufficient to cognize the whole of the truth pertaining to the Lord? The answer is given :—

*divya mālyāmbara dharaṁ divya gandhānulepanam |*
*sarvāścaryamayaṁ devam anantaṁ viśvatomukham ||*

दिव्य माल्य अम्बर धरम् *divya mālya ambara dharaṁ* wearing divine garlands and apparel दिव्य गन्ध अनुलेपनम् *divya gandha anulepanaṁ* anointed with divine unguents सर्व आश्चर्य मयम् *sarva āścarya mayaṁ* the all-wonderful देवम् *devaṁ* resplendent अनन्तम् *anantaṁ* endless विश्वतोमुखम् *viśvatomukhaṁ* with faces on all sides

**Wearing heavenly garlands and raiments, anointed with celestial perfumes, all wonderful, resplendent, boundless, with faces on all sides. 11**

Panorama corresponding to this definition is available even to the physical eye; what to speak then of the spectacle cognized with the divine eye! Godly features alone are in evidence everywhere and at all levels.

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२

दिवि सूर्य-सहस्रस्य भव-ईत् युगपत् उद्-स्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा (अ)स्-यात् भासः तस्य महा-आत्मनः ॥

*divi sūrya sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthitā |*
*yadi bhāḥ sadṛśī sā syād bhāsas tasya mahātmanaḥ ||*

दिवि *divi* in the sky सूर्यसहस्रस्य *sūrya sahasrasya* of a thousand suns भवेत् *bhavet* were युगपत् *yugapat* at once उत्थिता *utthitā* arisen यदि *yadi* if भाः *bhāḥ* splendour सदृशी *sadṛśī* like सा *sā* that स्यात् *syāt* would be भासः *bhāsaḥ* splendour तस्य *tasya* of that महात्मनः *mahātmanaḥ* of the mighty being

not solved the problems of life and death; it has only complicated them further.

Yoga steps in here to make the human life a fulfilment. Through the practice of yoga a super-sense called the divine eye can be developed. It is neither a freak nor an accident. With precision and certainty the spiritual eye can be evolved. It is the outcome of a perfectly disciplined pure life. Man *completes his evolution with the acquisition of this* divine insight. After getting established in spiritual excellence the *sadhaka* is required to subordinate his personal will to the Cosmic Will which is termed as the grace of the Lord in theological parlance. When these conditions are fulfilled the realization of God becomes possible.

God reveals Himself variously in the various planes of consciousness. At the mental plane He is cognized as the phenomenon; at the ethical level as the infallible Law; at *Bhāva samādhi* or the divine eye level as the Immanent or the kinetic aspect of Iswara; at *Nirvikalpa samādhi* or the intuition freed from mind, as the Transcendental Reality or the static aspect of Iswara; finally the individual merges into the Absolute which is Brahman. God-realization takes place in this order.

Arjuna is blessed with the vision of the Immanent Iswara. This realization relieves him of all of his problems, personal and public. He gets enlightened so as to discharge his duty as a willing instrument at the hands of the Lord. The Sage Vyasa is all perfection and he intuits Iswara in all of His

expressions of the same Consciousness. The celestial world, the terrestrial world, the nether world—these are all regions intended for enjoyments of various kinds. And each region has its own objects of enjoyment. All these are contained in Iswara who is the Life of lives; this is how the unity in variety is made possible.

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥ १४

ततः सः वि-स्मय-आ-विश्-तः हृष्-त-रोमा धनम्-जयः ।
प्र-नम्-य शिरसा देवम् कृत-अञ्जलिः अ-भाष-त ॥

*tataḥ sa vismayāviṣṭo hṛṣṭaromā dhanaṁjayaḥ* ।
*praṇamya śirasā devaṁ kṛtāñjalir abhāṣata* ॥

ततः *tataḥ* then सः *saḥ* he विस्मय आविष्टः *vismaya āviṣṭaḥ* filled with wonder हृष्टरोमा *hṛṣṭaromā* with hair standing on end धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* Arjuna प्रणम्य *praṇamya* having prostrated शिरसा *śirasā* with (his) head देवम् *devaṁ* the God कृताञ्जलिः *kṛtāñjaliḥ* with joined palms अभाषत *abhāṣata* spoke

**Then Dhananjaya, struck with amazement, his hair standing on end, bending down his head to the Lord in adoration, spoke with joined palms. 14**

When a yogi is blessed with the vision of God, its exuberance reveals itself through the spiritual charge it induces in his body and mind. Being struck with blissful amazement is the effect it brings on his mind. The hair standing on end, the head bowing down in reverence and the palms joining in spontaneous adoration are the marks of ecstasy visible on

अनेक वक्त्र नयनमनेकाद्भुत दर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणम् दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १०

अन्-एक-वक्त्र-नयनम् अन्-एक-अद्भुत-दर्शनम् ।
अन्-एक-दिव्य-आभरणम् दिव्य-अन्-एक-उद्-यत-आयुधम् ॥

*aneka vaktra nayanam anekādbhuta darśanam ।*
*aneka divyābharanaṁ divyānekodyatāyudham ॥*

अनेकवक्त्रनयनम् *aneka vaktra nayanam* with numerous mouths and eyes अनेक अद्भुत दर्शनम् *aneka adbhuta darśanaṁ* with numerous wonderful sights अनेक दिव्य आभरणम् *aneka divya ābharanaṁ* with numerous divine ornaments दिव्य अनेक उद्यत आयुधम् *divya aneka udyata āyudhaṁ* with numerous divine weapons uplifted

**With many mouths and eyes, with many marvellous sights, with many divine ornaments, with many uplifted divine weapons; 10**

The entire universe is His manifest body; His mouths and eyes are therefore countless. Many a divine happening is beyond the scope of the human knowledge. Such happenings have to be admired as marvellous to look at. Beauty emanates from Iswara. The attractive and lovely forms all over Nature adorned with magnificent decorations appear as if decked with divine ornaments. The divine designs and happenings are inevitable. Nothing can resist God's plans and executions. The uplifted divine weapons reveal Him as the Almighty.

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवं अनन्तं विश्वतो मुखम् ॥ ११

दिव्य-माल्य-अम्बर-धरम् दिव्य-गन्ध-अनु-लेपनम् ।
सर्व-आश्चर्य-मयम् देवम् अन्-अन्तम् विश्वतः-मुखम् ॥

on the lotus come out of the navel of *Mahāvishnu*. Beings movable and immovable are all contained in the Cosmic Form. Rishis like Vasishta and serpents like Vasuki are visible therein.

अनेक बाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६

अन्-एक-बाहु-उदर-वक्त्र-नेत्रम् पश्यामि त्वाम् सर्वतः अन्-अन्त-रूपम् ।
न अन्तम् न मध्यम् न पुनः तव आदिम् पश्यामि विश्व-ईश्वर विश्व-रूप ॥

*aneka bāhūdara vaktra netraṁ*
*paśyāmi tvāṁ sarvato 'nantarūpam* |
*nā 'ntaṁ na madhyaṁ na punas tavā 'diṁ*
*paśyāmi viśveśvara viśvarūpa* ||

अनेकबाहु उदरवक्त्रनेत्रम् *aneka bāhu udara vaktra netraṁ* with manifold arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes पश्यामि *paśyāmi* (I) see त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* on every side अनन्तरूपम् *ananta rūpaṁ* of boundless form न *na* not अन्तम् *antaṁ* end न *na* not मध्यम् *madhyaṁ* middle न *na* not पुनः *punaḥ* again तव *tava* thy आदिम् *ādiṁ* origin पश्यामि *paśyāmi* (I) see विश्वेश्वर *viśveśvara* O Lord of the universe विश्वरूप *viśva rūpa* O cosmic form

**I behold You, infinite in forms on all sides, with countless arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes; neither Your end nor the middle nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the universe, O Universal Form. 16**

All the varieties of manifestations are His forms and He also transcends them all.

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७

**If the splendour of a thousand suns were to blaze forth all at once in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that Mahatman. 12**

The unknown has to be inferred citing the known as the pattern. Even then the inference can only be vague if not erroneous. The realized souls only can have a correct view of Him. Men with godly qualities alone can cognize God in His true import. The simile of a thousand suns indicates that Iswara is unparalleled. He is therefore *Mahātman*—the Great Soul.

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ १३

तत्र एक-स्थम् जगत् कृत्स्नम् प्र-वि-भज्-तम् अन्-एकधा ।
अ-पश्य-त् देव-देवस्य शरीरे पाण्डव. तदा ॥

*tatrai 'kastham jagat kṛtsnaṁ pravibhaktam anekadhā*
*apaśyad devadevasya śarīre pāṇḍavas tadā* ॥

तत्र *tatra* there एकस्थम् *ekasthaṁ* resting in one जगत् *jagat* the universe कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnaṁ* the whole प्रविभक्तम् *pravibhaktam* divided अनेकधा *anekadhā* in many groups अपश्यत् *apaśyat* saw देवदेवस्य *deva devasya* of the God of gods शरीरे *śarīre* in the body पाण्डवः *pāṇḍavaḥ* son of Pandu तदा *tadā* then

**There in the body of the God of gods, Pandava then saw the whole universe with its many divisions drawn together into one. 13**

Unity in variety is the plan of Nature. The Cosmic Life is manifesting Itself as the celestials, as the human beings, as animals, as birds, as the vegetable kingdom and other species. These are all

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८

त्वम् अ-क्षरम् परमम् वेद्-इतव्यम् त्वम् अस्य विश्वस्य परम् नि-धानम् ।
त्वम् अ-व्ययः शाश्वत-धर्म-गोप्ता सनातनः त्वम् पुरुषः मन्-तः मे ॥

*tvam akṣaraṁ paramaṁ veditavyaṁ*
*tvam asya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam* ।
*tvam avyayaḥ śāśvata dharma goptā*
*sanātanas tvaṁ puruṣo mato me* ॥

त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अक्षरम् *akṣaraṁ* imperishable परमम् *paramaṁ* the supreme being वेदितव्यम् *veditavyaṁ* worthy to be known त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अस्य *asya* (of) this विश्वस्य *viśvasya* of universe परम् *paraṁ* the great निधानम् *nidhānaṁ* treasure-house त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अव्ययः *avyayaḥ* imperishable शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता *śāśvata dharma goptā* protector of the Eternal Dharma सनातनः *sanātanaḥ* ancient त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* Purusha मतः *mataḥ* thought मे *me* by me

**You are the Imperishable, the Supreme Being to be realized. You are the great treasure-house of this universe; You are the imperishable Guardian of the Eternal Dharma. You are the ancient Purusha, I deem. 18**

He who realizes Iswara becomes worthy of attaining Him. The realization of that Supreme Being is therefore the goal of the *sadhaka*. The Lord is the treasure-house of this universe even as *ākāsa* is the treasure-house of the moving clouds. When the universe perishes periodically, He remains imperishable. In His sublime proximity the Eternal Dharma or the functioning of the universe takes

his body. Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. The following is a sample of the rapturous utterance —

**The Cosmic Vision Defined — 15-31**

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थमृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५

पश्यामि देवान् तव देव देहे सर्वान् तथा भूत-विशेष-सङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणम् ईशम् कमल-आसन-स्थम् ऋषीन् च सर्वान् उरगान् च दिव्यान् ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*pasyāmi devāms tava deva dehe*
*sarvāms tathā bhūta visesa samghān* ।
*brahmānam īsam kamalāsanastham*
*ṛsīms ca sarvān uragāms ca divyān* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

पश्यामि *pasyāmi* (I) see देवान् *devān* the gods तव *tava* thy देव *deva* O God देहे *dehe* in the body सर्वान् *sarvān* all तथा *tathā* also भूतविशेषसघान् *bhūta viseṣa samghān* hosts of various classes of beings ब्रह्माणम् *brahmānam* Brahma ईशम् *īsam* the Lord कमल आसनस्थम् *kamala āsana stham* seated on the lotus ऋषीन् *ṛsīn* sages च *ca* and सर्वान् *sarvān* all उरगान् *uragān* serpents च *ca* and दिव्यान् *divyān* divine

**Arjuna said:**

**I see all the gods, O God, in Your body and hosts of all grades of beings; Brahma, the Lord, seated on the lotus and all the Rishis and celestial serpents.**

The four-faced Brahma is the Creator of all beings; he is therefore revered as *īsa.* He is seated

senses. The light in the sun, moon and fire is only a reflection of the original *Atmajyoti.* Speaking of the sun and the moon as the eyes of Iswara and of the fire as His mouth is poetic. The universe is cognizable because of the radiance of Iswara.

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।
दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥ २०

द्यावापृथिव्योः इदम् अन्तरम् हि वि-आप्तम् त्वया एकेन दिशः च सर्वाः ।
दृश्-त्वा अद्भुतम् रूपम् उग्रम् तव इदम् लोक-त्रयम् प्र-व्यथितम् महा-आत्मन् ॥

*dyāvāpṛthivyor idam antaraṁ hi*
*vyāptaṁ tvayai 'kena diśaś ca sarvāḥ* ।
*dṛṣṭvā 'dbhutaṁ rūpam ugraṁ tave 'daṁ*
*lokatrayaṁ pravyathitaṁ mahātman* ॥

द्यावापृथिव्योः *dyāvā pṛthivyoḥ* of heaven and earth इदम् *idaṁ* this अन्तरम् *antaraṁ* interspace हि *hi* indeed व्याप्तम् *vyāptaṁ* are filled त्वया *tvayā* by thee एकेन *ekena* alone दिशः *diśaḥ* quarters च *ca* and सर्वाः *sarvāḥ* all दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen अद्भुतम् *adbhutaṁ* wonderful रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form उग्रम् *ugraṁ* terrible तव *tava* thy इदम् *idaṁ* this लोकत्रयम् *loka trayaṁ* the three worlds प्रव्यथितम् *pravyathitaṁ* are trembling with fear महात्मन् *mahātman* O Mahatman

**This space between heaven and earth and all the quarters are filled by You alone. Having seen this, Your marvellous and terrible form, the three worlds are trembling with fear, O Mahatman. 20**

Arjuna now realizes that the Lord is all-pervading. The Lord is not only all charm and sweetness, He is also all fierceness and terror. Of these opposites the experience of the one or the other comes to

किरीटिनम् गदिनम् चक्रिणम् च तेज -राशिम् सर्वत दीप्ति-मन्तम् ।
पश्या मि त्वाम् दुर्-निर्-ईक्ष्-यम् समन्तात् दीप्त-अनल-अर्क द्युतिम् अ-प्र मेयम् ॥

*kirītinam gadinam cakrinam ca*
*tejorāśim sarvato dīptimantam* ।
*paśyāmi tvām durnirīksyam samantād*
*dīptānalārkadyutim aprameyam* ॥

किरीटिनम् *kirītinam* one with diadem गदिनम् *gadinam* with club चक्रिणम् *cakrinam* with discus च *ca* and तेजोराशिम् *tejo rāśim* a mass of radiance सर्वत *sarvatah* everywhere दीप्तिमन्तम् *dīptimantam* shining पश्यामि *paśyāmi* (I) see त्वाम् *tvām* thee दुर्निरीक्ष्यम् *dur nirīkṣyam* very hard to look at समन्तात् *samantāt* all round दीप्त अनल अर्क द्युतिम् *dīpta anala arka dyutim* blazing like burning fire and sun अप्रमेयम् *aprameyam* immeasurable

**I see You with diadem, club, and discus; a mass of radiance blazing everywhere, hard to look at, all round dazzling like flaming fire and sun, and immeasurable. 17**

Any brilliance experienced in dream seems to dazzle the physical eyes though they are not actually affected thereby The divine eye is said here to get dazzled on a greater measure, but its effect on the mind is salutary Even the spiritual eye which is of a calibre superior to that of the fleshy eye, is not helpful to cognize the Cosmic Form in its entirety. It is therefore adored as the immeasurable

The colour of the *sattva guna* is white The reflection therefore of the brilliance of Atman on it is more dazzling than the bright sun

The conclusion that Arjuna has arrived at is as follows.—

As disease cleanses the body of bad matter, the Lord cleanses the world of wickedness by destruction on a colossal scale. Those who vaguely understand this design of the Lord, tremblingly submit themselves to the inevitable, with folded hands. There is as much grandeur in the sunset as there is in the sunrise. Like this, there is as much divinity in the Lord's wiping out the universe as in His creating it. Great Rishis like Narada and Siddhas like Kapila intuit the sublimity of this divine sport and go into raptures in extolling it. Their hymns abound with inspiring ideas clothed in exuberant language. The purport of the praise is, "Lord, may good come out of Your great deeds!"

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।
गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥ २२

रुद्र-आदित्याः वसवः ये च साध्याः विश्वे अश्विनौ मरुतः च ऊष्मन्-पाः च ।
गन्धर्व-यक्ष-अ-सुर-सिद्ध-संघाः वि-ईक्षन्ते त्वाम् वि-स्मिताः च एव सर्वे ॥

*rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā*
*viśve 'śvinau marutaś co 'ṣmapāś ca* |
*gandharva yakṣāsura siddha saṁghā*
*vīkṣante tvāṁ vismitāś cai 'va sarve* ||

रुद्र आदित्याः *rudra ādityāḥ* Rudras and Adityas वसवः *vasavaḥ* Vasus ये *ye* these च *ca* and साध्याः *sādhyāḥ* Sadhyas विश्वे *viśve* Viswedevas अश्विनौ *aśvinau* (the two) Aswins मरुतः *marutaḥ* Maruts च *ca* and ऊष्मपाः *ūṣmapāḥ* Pitrus च *ca* and गन्धर्व यक्ष असुर सिद्ध सङ्घाः *gandharva yakṣa asura siddha saṁghāḥ* hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas वीक्षन्ते *vīkṣante* are looking at त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee विस्मिताः *vismitāḥ* astonished च *ca* and एव *eva* even सर्वे *sarve* all

place regularly. Arjuna is now convinced of these verities.

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यमनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९

अन्-आदि-मध्य-अन्तम् अन्-अन्त-वीर्यम् अन्-अन्त-बाहुम् शशि-सूर्य-नेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वाम् दीप्त-हुताश-वक्त्रम् स्व-तेजसा विश्वम् इदम् तपन्तम् ॥

*anādi madhyāntam ananta vīryam*
*ananta bāhum śaśi sūrya netram* ।
*paśyāmi tvām dīpta hutāśa vaktram*
*svatejasā viśvam idam tapantam* ॥

अनादि मध्य अन्तम् *anādi madhya antam* without beginning, middle or end अनन्तवीर्यम् *ananta vīryam* infinite in power अनन्तबाहुम् *ananta bāhum* of endless arms शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् *śaśi sūrya netram* the sun and the moon (thy) eyes पश्यामि *paśyāmi* (I) see त्वाम् *tvām* thee दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रम् *dīpta hutāśa vaktram* the burning fire of thy mouth स्वतेजसा *svatejasā* with thy radiance विश्वम् *viśvam* the universe इदम् *idam* this तपन्तम् *tapantam* heating

**I see You without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of infinite arms, the sun and the moon being Your eyes, the burning fire Your mouth; heating the whole universe with Your radiance. 19**

There is no beginning, middle or end to the One who is beyond time, space and causation. Iswara is infinite in power because He creates, sustains and withdraws the universe as a mere sport. God is of infinite arms as He gets His Cosmic scheme worked out engaging all beings as His instruments. It is the brilliance of Atman that shines as the light in the

Man projects the contents of his mind and cognizes them in the world outside. Arjuna had no idea till then that it is Iswara who has become the entire universe and that there is also a terrific aspect to His manifestation. The sudden and unexpected vision of it frightens him even though he is a person of extraordinary calibre. He projects this unsettled state of his mind on the world and says that the worlds are terror-struck even as he is. He mentions the cause of his being frightened as follows :—

नभः स्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥

नभः-स्पृशम् दीप्तम् अन्-एक-वर्णम् वि-आत्त-आननम् दीप्त-विशाल-नेत्रम् ।
दृश्-त्वा हि त्वाम् प्र-व्यथि-त-अन्तरात्मा धृतिम् न विन्द्-आमि शमम् च विष्णो ॥

*nabhaḥ spṛśaṁ dīptam aneka varṇaṁ*
*vyāttānanaṁ dīpta viśāla netram* ।
*dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātmā*
*dhṛtiṁ na vindāmi śamaṁ ca viṣṇo* ॥

नभःस्पृशम् *nabhaḥ spṛśaṁ* touching the sky दीप्तम् *dīptaṁ* shining अनेकवर्णम् *aneka varṇaṁ* in many colours व्यात्ताननम् *vyāttānanaṁ* with mouths wide open दीप्तविशाल नेत्रम् *dīpta viśāla netraṁ* with large fiery eyes दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen हि *hi* verily त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee प्रव्यथित अन्तरात्मा *pravyathita antarātmā* terrified at heart धृतिम् *dhṛtiṁ* courage न *na* not विन्दामि *vindāmi* (I) find शमम् *śamaṁ* peace च *ca* and विष्णो *viṣṇo* O Vishnu

**When I see You touching the sky, blazing with many colours, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, my heart trembles in fear and I find neither courage nor peace, O Vishnu.** **24**

the beholder only to reflect his own frame of mind Arjuna sees this terrible form of the Lord quite in tune with his disposition He who did not want to create a ghastly war scene now realizes that with or without his instrumentality, the Lord has assumed this terrific form to purge the world of evils

अमी हि त्वां सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति केचिद्भीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षि सिद्धसङ्घाः स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥

अमी हि त्वाम् सुर सघा विश्-अन्ति के चित् भी-ता प्र-अञ्जलय गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्ति इति (वच्) उच्-त्वा महा-ऋषि-सिद्ध सघा स्तुवन्ति त्वाम् स्तु-तिभि पुष्कलाभि ॥

*ami hi tvām surasamghā visanti*
*kecid bhitāh prāñjalayo grnanti* ।
*svasti 'ty uktvā maharsi siddhasamghāh*
*stuvanti tvām stutibhih puskalābhih* ॥

अमी *amī* these हि *hi* verily त्वाम् *tvām* thee सुरसङ्घा *sura samghāh* hosts of Devas विशन्ति *visanti* enter केचित् *kecit* some भीता *bhitāh* in fear प्राञ्जलय *prāñjalayah* with joined palms गृणन्ति *grnanti* extol स्वस्ति *svasti* may it be well इति *iti* thus उक्त्वा *uktvā* having said महर्षिसिद्धसघा *maharsi siddha samghāh* bands of great Rishis and Siddhas स्तुवन्ति *stuvanti* praise त्वाम् *tvām* thee स्तुतिभि *stutibhih* with hymns पुष्कलाभि *puskalābhih* complete

**These hosts of Devas indeed enter into You; some in awe extol You with joined palms; bands of great Rishis and Siddhas pronounce, "May it be well" and praise You with sublime hymns. 21**

When the need for it comes, the Lord destroys not only the human beings on a large scale, but also the Devas who are called immortals by courtesy.

less sun. In such a situation the quarters and the directions are all lost sight of. Arjuna finds himself in such a position now. Like the fire of the dissolution of the universe, the all-consuming blaze of the Cosmic Form has confounded Arjuna. Therefore he begs of the Lord to withdraw that terrible form and resume the calm and gracious form.

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥ २६

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥ २७

अमी च त्वाम् धृत-राष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सह एव अवनि-पाल-संघैः ।
भीष्मः द्रोणः सूत-पुत्रः तथा असौ सह अस्मदीयैः अपि योध-मुख्यैः ॥
वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणाः विशन्ति दंष्ट्रा-करालानि भयानकानि ।
के-चित् वि-लग्नाः दशन-अन्तरेषु सम्-दृश्-यन्ते चूर्णितैः उत्तम-अंगैः ॥

*amī ca tvāṁ dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ*
*sarve sahai 'vā 'vanipālasaṁghaiḥ* ।
*bhīṣmo droṇaḥ sūtaputras tathā 'sau*
*sahā 'smadīyair api yodhamukhyaiḥ* ॥
*vaktrāṇi te tvaramāṇā viśanti*
*daṁṣṭrākarālāni bhayānakāni* ।
*kecid vilagnā daśanāntareṣu*
*saṁdṛśyante cūrṇitair uttamāṅgaiḥ* ॥

अमी *amī* these च *ca* and त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee धृतराष्ट्रस्य *dhṛtarāṣṭrasya* of Dhrtarashtra पुत्राः *putrāḥ* sons सर्वे *sarve* all सह *saha* with एव *eva* even अवनिपालसङ्घैः *avani pāla saṁghaiḥ* hosts of kings of the earth भीष्मः *bhīṣmaḥ* Bhishma द्रोणः *droṇaḥ* Drona सूतपुत्रः *sūta putraḥ* Sutaputra तथा *tathā* also असौ *asau* this सह *saha* with

**The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Viswas, Asvins, Maruts, Ushmapas, hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas—they are all gazing at You and they are amazed. 22**

*Ushmapās* are they who delight in partaking of hot cakes and hot drinks The *Pitrus* or manes are called *Ushmapās*. Even the celestials are not able to gauge the Cosmic Form of Iswara in its entirety. Some aspects of it come within their purview and drive them into bewilderment.

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥ २३

रूपम् महत् ते बहु-वक्त्र-नेत्रम् महा-बाहो बहु-बाहु-ऊरु-पादम् ।
बहु-उदरम् बहु दंष्ट्रा-करालम् दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्र-व्यथिताः तथा अहम् ॥

*rūpam mahat te bahu vaktra netram*
*mahābāho bahu bāhūru pādam* ।
*bahūdaram bahu damstrākarālam*
*drstvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathā 'ham* ॥

रूपम् *rūpam* form महत् *mahat* immeasurable ते *te* thy बहुवक्त्रनेत्रम् *bahu vaktra netram* with many mouths and eyes महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed बहुबाहु ऊरुपादम् *bahu bāhu ūru pādam* with many arms, thighs and feet बहु उदरम् *bahu udaram* with many stomachs बहुदंष्ट्राकरालम् *bahu damstrā karālam* fearful with many tusks दृष्ट्वा *drstvā* having seen लोकाः *lokāḥ* the worlds प्रव्यथिताः *pravyathitāḥ* are terrified तथा *tathā* also अहम् *aham* I

**Seeing Your immeasurable form with myriad mouths and eyes, O mighty-armed, with myriad arms, thighs and feet, with myriad stomachs, and terrible with myriad tusks — the worlds are terror-struck, and so am I. 23**

*yathā nadīnāṁ bahavo 'mbuvegāḥ*
*samudram evā 'bhimukhā dravanti* ।
*tathā tavā 'mī naralokavīrā*
*viśanti vaktrāṇy abhivijvalanti* ॥

यथा *yathā* as नदीनां *nadīnāṁ* of rivers बहवः *bahavaḥ* many अम्बुवेगाः *ambuvegāḥ* water currents समुद्रम् *samudraṁ* to the ocean एव *eva* verily अभिमुखाः *abhimukhāḥ* towards द्रवन्ति *dravanti* flow तथा *tathā* so तव *tava* thy अमी *amī* these नरलोकवीराः *naraloka vīrāḥ* heroes in the world of men विशन्ति *viśanti* enter वक्त्राणि *vaktrāṇi* mouths अभिविज्वलन्ति *abhivijvalanti* flaming

**Truly, as the many torrents of rivers rush towards the ocean, so do these heroes in the world of men fling themselves into Your fiercely flaming mouths. 28**

The rivers that emerge from mountains have no alternative but to rush to empty themselves in the ocean. The rulers of the earth plan for their permanent domination over it while actually they are caught in the death-trap of Destiny. While being consumed they are planning for conquest.

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥ २९

यथा प्र-दीप्-तम् ज्वलनम् पतङ्गाः विश्-अ-अन्ति नाशाय सम्-ऋद्ध-वेगाः ।
तथा एव नाशाय विश्-अ-अन्ति लोकाः तव अपि वक्त्राणि सम्-ऋद्ध-वेगाः ॥

*yathā pradīptaṁ jvalanaṁ pataṅgā*
*viśanti nāśāya samṛddhavegāḥ* ।
*tathai 'va nāśāya viśanti lokās*
*tavā 'pi vaktrāṇi samṛddhavegāḥ* ॥

It is but natural that one gets unnerved when one is driven into an inconceivable world-devouring sight One gets settled understanding only when one realizes that fury and calmness are concomitant in the ocean of the Cosmic Being

Arjuna confesses the effect of the terror created in his mind —

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ २५

दंष्ट्रा-करालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वा एव काल अनल सन्निभानि ।
दिशः न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्र सीद देव-ईश जगत्-नि वास ॥

*damstrākarālāni ca te mukhāni*
*dṛṣṭvai 'va kālānalasamnibhāni* ।
*diśo na jāne na labhe ca śarma*
*prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa* ॥

दंष्ट्राकरालानि *damstrā karālāni* fearful with tusks च *ca* and ते *te* thy मुखानि *mukhāni* mouths दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen एव *eva* even काल अनलसन्निभानि *kāla anala samnibhāni* blazing like Pralaya-fires दिशः *diśaḥ* the quarters न *na* not जाने *jāne* know न *na* not लभे *labhe* do (I) find च *ca* and शर्म *śarma* peace प्रसीद *prasīda* have mercy देवेश *deveśa* O Lord of the Devas जगन्निवास *jagannivāsa* O abode of the universe

**When I see Your mouths terrible with tusks resembling Pralaya-fires, I know not the four quarters nor do I find peace. Be gracious, O Lord of the gods, O Abode of the universe. 25**

The quarters are discerned with the help of the sun and the moon But let it be supposed that one gets immersed in the womb of the blazing and bound-

समग्रम् *samagraṁ* the whole भासः *bhāsaḥ* rays तव *tava* thy उग्राः *ugrāḥ* fierce प्रतपन्ति *pratapanti* are burning विष्णो *viṣṇo* O Vishnu

**Devouring all the worlds on every side with Your flaming mouths, You lick Your lips. Your fiery rays, filling the whole world with radiance, are burning, O Vishnu!** 30

Vishnu is he who is all-pervading. He pervades the world as a force creative and destructive. At this juncture the Lord appears to Arjuna as a destructive force. In his desolation he supplicates as follows:—

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥ ३१

आ-ख्या-हि मे कः भवान् उग्र-रूपः नमः अस्-तु ते देव-वर प्र-सीद ।
वि-ज्ञा-तुम् इच्छ-आमि भवन्तम् आद्यम् न हि प्र-जा-ना-मि तव प्र-वृत्-तिम् ॥

*ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugrarūpo*
*namo 'stu te devavara prasīda* ।
*vijñātuṁ icchāmi bhavantaṁ ādyaṁ*
*na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttiṁ* ॥

आख्याहि *ākhyāhi* tell मे *me* me कः *kaḥ* who (art) भवान् *bhavān* thou उग्ररूपः *ugra rūpaḥ* fierce in form नमः *namaḥ* salutations अस्तु *astu* be ते *te* to thee देववर *devavara* O God supreme प्रसीद *prasīda* have mercy विज्ञातुम् *vijñātuṁ* to know इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) wish भवन्तम् *bhavantaṁ* thee आद्यम् *ādyaṁ* the original being न *na* not हि *hi* indeed प्रजानामि *prajānāmi* (I) know तव *tava* thy प्रवृत्तिम् *pravṛttiṁ* doing

**Tell me who You are, so fierce in form. I bow down to You, O God Supreme; have mercy. I desire to know You, the Primal One. I know not Your purpose.**

अस्मदीयैः *asmadīyaiḥ* with (those) of ours अपि *api* also योधमुख्यैः *yodha mukhyaiḥ* (with) warrior chiefs

वक्त्राणि *vaktrāni* mouths ते *te* thy त्वरमाणाः *tvaramāṇāḥ* hurrying विशन्ति *viśanti* enter दंष्ट्राकरालानि *daṁstrā karālāni* terrible-toothed भयानकानि *bhayānakāni* fearful to behold केचित् *kecit* some विलग्नाः *vilagnāḥ* sticking दशन अन्तरेषु *daśana antareṣu* in the gaps between the teeth संदृश्यन्ते *saṁdṛśyante* are found चूर्णितैः *cūrṇitaiḥ* crushed to powder उत्तम अङ्गैः *uttama aṅgaiḥ* with (their) heads

**All the sons of Dhrtarashtra with hosts of kings of the earth, Bhishma, Drona and Sutaputra, with the warrior chiefs of ours, 26**

**Enter hurrying into Your mouth, terrible with tusks and fearful to look at. Some are found sticking in the gaps between the teeth with their heads crushed to powder. 27**

Sutaputra means the son of a charioteer. Here this word connotes Karna, the sworn enemy of Arjuna. He sees his arch-enemy doomed to death. Further his enemies are all already in the grip of death. His allies are also destined to be wiped out in the imminent conflagration. The object of the impending great war is to rid the world of the dead *weight of the human weed. The loss for the victor* is going to be no less than that for the vanquished.

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः समुद्रमेवाभिमुखाद्रवन्ति ।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥ २८

यथा नदीनाम् बहवः अम्बु-वेगाः समुद्रम् एव अभि-मुखाः द्रवन्ति ।
तथा तव अमी नर-लोक-वीराः विश्-अन्ति वक्त्राणि अभि-वि-ज्वलन्ति ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

कालः *kālaḥ* time अस्मि *asmi* (I) am लोकक्षयकृत् *loka kṣaya kṛt* world destroying प्रवृद्धः *pravṛddhaḥ* mighty लोकान् *lokān* the worlds समाहर्तुम् *samāhartuṁ* to destroy इह *iha* here प्रवृत्तः *pravṛttaḥ* engaged ऋते *ṛte* without अपि *api* also त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee न *na* not भविष्यन्ति *bhaviṣyanti* shall live सर्वे *sarve* all ये *ye* these अवस्थिताः *avasthitāḥ* arrayed प्रत्यनीकेषु *pratyanīkeṣu* in hostile armies योधाः *yodhāḥ* warriors

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**I am the mighty world-destroying Time now engaged in wiping out the world. Even without you the warriors arrayed in hostile armies shall not live.**

In spite of a life-long companionship with Sri Krishna, what Arjuna has come to know of Him is very little and what remains to be known is much. Hence rises the question, "Tell me who You are." The answer, "I am the mighty world-destroying Time" is one among the numerous definitions of Iswara. He is known as *Mahākāla*. This answer solves the immediate puzzle in the mind of Arjuna.

All events in Nature get buried in time. Relentlessly and constantly it is consuming everything. Again it is time that measures all events. As *ākāsa* contains all manifested things in itself, time contains all events or causation in itself. As one ascends a hill one sees the ups and downs below merging into a vast expanse. Similarly in the infinitude of time all the happenings in the universe get swallowed. This Time is verily Iswara.

यथा *yathā* as प्रदीप्तम् *pradīptam* blazing ज्वलनम् *jvalanaṁ* fire पतङ्गाः *pataṅgāḥ* moths विशन्ति *viśanti* enter नाशाय *nāśāya* to destruction समृद्धवेगाः *samṛddha vegāḥ* with quickened speed तथा *tathā* so एव *eva* only नाशाय *nāśāya* to destruction विशन्ति *viśanti* enter लोकाः *lokāḥ* creatures तव *tava* thy अपि *api* also वक्त्राणि *vaktrāṇi* mouths समृद्धवेगाः *samṛddha vegāḥ* with quickened speed

**As moths rush headlong into a blazing fire for destruction, so do these creatures hurriedly speed into Your mouths for their destruction. 29**

Though merged in the ocean, the waters of the rivers continue to play their parts in the cosmic function. Whereas, as moths rush only to perish in the blazing fire, these multitudes are marching into the coming conflagration for their destruction which has become a cosmic necessity. But their redemption lies in their being reborn with a change of attitude.

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥ ३०

लेलिह्यसे ग्रस-मानः समन्तात् लोकान् समग्रान् वदनैः ज्वलद्भिः ।
तेजः-भिः आ-पूर्य जगत् समग्रम् भासः तव उग्रा. प्र-तप-अन्ति विष्णो ॥

*lelihyase grasamānaḥ samantāl*
*lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ* ।
*tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagraṁ*
*bhāsas tavo 'grāḥ pratapanti visṇo* ॥

लेलिह्यसे *lelihyase* thou lickest ग्रसमान. *grasamānaḥ* devouring समन्तात् *samantāt* on every side लोकान् *lokān* the worlds समग्रान् *samagrān* all वदनैः *vaddnaiḥ* with mouths ज्वलद्भिः *jvaladbhiḥ* flaming तेजोभिः *tejobhiḥ* with radiance आपूर्य *āpūrya* filling जगत् *jagat* the world

*tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha yaśo labhasva*
*jitvā śatrūn bhuṅkṣva rājyaṁ samṛddham* ।
*mayai 'vai 'te nihatāḥ pūrvam eva*
*nimittamātraṁ bhava savyasācin* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou उत्तिष्ठ *uttiṣṭha* stand up यशः *yaśaḥ* fame लभस्व *labhasva* obtain जित्वा *jitvā* having conquered शत्रून् *śatrūn* enemies भुङ्क्ष्व *bhuṅkṣva* enjoy राज्यम् *rājyaṁ* the kingdom समृद्धम् *samṛddhaṁ* the unrivalled मया *mayā* by me एव *eva* even एते *ete* these निहताः *nihatāḥ* have been slain पूर्वम् *pūrvaṁ* already एव *eva* even निमित्तमात्रम् *nimitta mātraṁ* a mere instrument भव *bhava* be सव्यसाचिन् *savyasācin* O left-handed one

**You therefore arise and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. By Me have they been verily slain already. You be merely an outward cause, O Savyasachin.** 33

The Lord's work does not depend on the agency of man for its fulfilment. Precisely and effectively it takes place of its own accord. Man but earns merit by participating in it. By rising equal to an occasion and by discharging his duty, man emerges the better for it. By availing himself of the opportunities and facilities providentially provided in the training ground of this world, man builds his personality. And that is his gain in being a willing instrument in the hands of the Lord.

Fame is not an end in itself. It comes as a by-product of an exemplary and dutiful life. The man of sterling character and noble deeds is praised by all even as a fully blossomed flower is admired by all.

The calm, charming and beautiful form of God attracts the devotees Being drawn to Him in this way is deemed as devotional worship His terrific form arrests the attention of the devotee in another way And getting absorbed in it is also a form of worship The fully qualified devotee is he who accepts the sublime and the terrific aspects of God with equal devotion and absorption Fear is conquered by the worship of the fearful But Arjuna like many an ordinary devotee is not prepared for the worship of the Terrible

That Iswara is everything is being realized by Arjuna But what all phases are comprised in that everything, is not known to him and it is impossible for him to know A man and his activities are interrelated Knowing his activities is one of the ways of knowing the man, to some extent at least Similarly God can be known in a way through His doings And that is the supplication that Arjuna makes The Lord deigns to reveal His purpose —

**The Lord Embodied as Time — 32-34**

श्री भगवानुवाच

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान् समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥ ३२

काल अस् मि लोक क्षय-कृत् प्र-वृद्ध लोकान् सम्-आ-हर्तुम् इह प्र-वृत्-त ।
ऋते अपि त्वाम् न भवि स्यन्ति सर्व ये अव-स्थिता प्रत्यनीकेषु योधा ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*
*kālo 'smi lokakṣayakṛt pravṛddho*
*lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttaḥ ।*
*ṛte 'pi tvāṁ na bhaviṣyanti sarve*
*ye 'vasthitāḥ pratyanīkeṣu yodhāḥ ॥*

द्रोणम् च भीष्मम् च जयद्-रथम् च कर्णं तथा अन्यान् अपि योध-वीरान् ।
मया हन्-तान् त्वम् जहि मा व्यथिष्ठाः युध्-य-स्व जे-तासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥

*droṇaṁ ca bhīṣmaṁ ca jayadrathaṁ ca*
*karṇaṁ tathā 'nyān api yodhavīrān* ।
*mayā hatāṁs tvaṁ jahi mā vyathiṣṭhā*
*yudhyasva jetāsi raṇe sapatnān* ॥

द्रोणम् *droṇaṁ* Drona च *ca* and भीष्मम् *bhīṣmaṁ* Bhishma च *ca* and जयद्रथम् *jayadrathaṁ* Jayadratha च *ca* and कर्णम् *karṇaṁ* Karna तथा *tathā* also अन्यान् *anyān* others अपि *api* also योधवीरान् *yodha vīrān* brave warriors मया *mayā* by me हतान् *hatān* slain त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou जहि *jahi* do kill मा *mā* not व्यथिष्ठाः *vyathiṣṭhāḥ* be distressed with fear युध्यस्व *yudhyasva* fight जेतासि *jetāsi* shalt conquer रणे *raṇe* in the battle सपत्नान् *sapatnān* the enemies

**Slay Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors who are already doomed by Me. Be not distressed with fear. Fight and you will conquer your enemies in battle. 34**

It has been already made clear that the killing of Drona and Bhishma is not contrary to dharma. The next question is whether they can be killed at all. For, Drona is endowed with weapons divine. And Bhishma is one whom death cannot approach without his own permission. Nobody has so far successfully combated with him. Yet another problem is in regard to Jayadratha. By hard penance his father has acquired the power to make the head of that man burst who succeeded in slaughtering his son. Fourthly vanquishing Karna is equally problematic.

"I know not Your purpose" is the frightened inquiry made by Arjuna. The Lord deals with that mystery. He says He is intent on wiping out the world. Death in fact is taking place ceaselessly. When it is scattered and spread out, it is called the law of nature; but when it is concentrated, it is called a catastrophe. The Lord has this work of extermination done in both the ways — severally and collectively; extensively and intensively. The Mahabharata war is an instance of His intensive destruction of mankind. Whenever a need for it arises He does it very effectively. He truly adores God who sees His hand at work in all destructions small and great. Nothing in the world is terrible to the knower of the ways of the Lord.

Arjuna is given to understand now that the destruction of Bhishma, Drona and Karna is inevitable. He who did not want to be the cause of the death of the venerable ones, realizes now that it is not possible for man to avert the design of the Lord. Arjuna's eagerness to take revenge on Karna is now shorn of its personal poignancy and spite.

It is certain that these men of might are going to perish independent of Arjuna's instrumentality. Why then should he at all engage himself in this carnage ? The necessity for it is explained :—

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम्।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥ ३३

तस्मात् त्वम् उद्-तिष्ठ यशः लभ-स्व जि-त्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यम् सम्-ऋद्धम्।
मया एव एते नि-हन्-ताः पूर्वम् एव निमित्त-मात्रम् भव सव्य-साचिन् ॥

संजय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

एतत् *etat* that श्रुत्वा *srutvā* having heard वचनम् *vacanaṁ* speech केशवस्य *kesavasya* of Kesava कृताञ्जलिः *kṛtāñjaliḥ* with joined palms वेपमानः *vepamānaḥ* trembling किरीटी *kirītī* the crowned one नमस्कृत्वा *namaskṛtvā* prostrating (himself) भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again एव *eva* even आह *āha* addressed कृष्णम् *kṛṣṇaṁ* to Krishna सगद्गदम् *sagadgadaṁ* in a choked voice भीतभीतः *bhītabhītaḥ* overwhelmed with fear प्रणम्य *praṇamya* having prostrated

Sanjaya said:

**Having heard that speech of Kesava, the crowned one (Arjuna) with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear. 35**

The crown is the symbol of monarchy. A king with a crown on, should not bow his head to anybody. To be fearless is his dharma. Instead of paying homage to others he is to receive homage from others. To be firm and resolute in his utterances is the way of a crowned one. But such kingly conventions have all taken to their heels. Even kings have to humble themselves before God. The more the *Jivatman* humbles himself before the Paramatman, the better it is for him.

What did the trembling Arjuna do? It comes from his own lips :—

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ॥ ३६

Opposing evil and vanquishing it is the duty of a Kshatriya. The Lord's design here is conducive to this auspicious end.

Prosperous earthly life is no detriment to spiritual progress. Rather it is a stepping stone to *Sreyas*. Earthly kingdom conquered by conforming to dharma is a rare achievement. Efficient and prosperous protection of the kingdom enriches man's life temporally and spiritually.

The Lord has willed to wipe out wickedness from the world. Arjuna is no more confronted with any uphill task. It is more than sufficient if he merely makes a show of waging the war. The total destruction of the enemies will be the result. But Arjuna is not a man of mediocre stuff. He is a Savyasachin (ambidexterous) —one who can make a deadly delivery of the arrow with the left hand even. He is invincible in war. The opportune moment has come to him to show his valour. By being an instrument in the hands of the Lord, he can gain the glory of having defeated Drona and Bhishma. Right action at right time leads to victory, prosperity and blessedness.

A doubt may rise in the mind of Arjuna whether the vision that he has had just now was not a self-created illusion. The Lord relieves him of this apprehension as follows :—

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥ ३४

about the working of the universe run pell-mell bringing ruin on themselves. The knowing devotees of the Lord admire His macrocosmic creation and speak highly of it. The perfected ones such as the yogis and Siddhas pay their reverence by participating in His cosmic functions.

People are all variously related to Iswara. The *Rishis* are all His kith and kin. The other spiritually advanced people are like His friends and companions. The commonalty is just His creation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥ ३७

कस्मात् च ते न नमेरन् महा-आत्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणः अपि आदि-कर्त्रे ।
अन्-अन्त देव-ईश जगद्-निवास त्वम् अ-क्षरम् सत् अ-सत् तत् परम् यत् ॥

*kasmāc ca te na nameran mahātman*
*garīyase brahmaṇo 'py ādikartre* ।
*ananta deveśa jagannivāsa*
*tvam akṣaraṁ sad asat tat paraṁ yat* ॥

कस्मात् *kasmāt* why च *ca* and ते *te* thy न *na* not नमेरन् *nameran* may prostrate महात्मन् *mahātman* O great-souled one गरीयसे *garīyase* greater ब्रह्मण: *brahmaṇaḥ* of Brahma अपि *api* also आदिकर्त्रे *ādi kartre* the primal cause अनन्त *ananta* O infinite being देवेश *deveśa* O Lord of gods जगन्निवास *jagannivāsa* O abode of the universe त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अक्षरम् *akṣaraṁ* imperishable सत् *sat* the being असत् *asat* non-being तत् *tat* that परम् *paraṁ* the supreme यत् *yat* which

**And why should they not, O Great-souled One, bow to You, greater (than all), the Primal Cause even of Brahma, O Infinite Being, O Lord of gods, O**

He is armed with 'Sakti' a deadly weapon bestowed upon him by Indra. There is no escape for that man against whom this weapon is used. Karna keeps it to take vengeance on Arjuna. To be hesitant with fear is but natural to one in Arjuna's plight.

'When God is with us who is against us? When God is not with us, who is for us?' — This maxim is worth pondering over and to be pursued in life. God is here with Arjuna. What can his powerful enemies do against him? The Lord has willed to have them destroyed. Their prowess is already withdrawn from them. They are now like pictures which can be easily brushed aside. Arjuna has only to function just as an arrow at the hands of an archer. The Lord will have His work done through his agency. The glory of a great conquest will be his, as a reward for this agency. This point is driven home into the mind of Partha.

**Arjuna Praises the Lord—35-44**

सञ्जय उवाच

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५

एतत् श्रु-त्वा वचनम् के-शवस्य कृत-अञ्जलिः वेप-मानः किरीटी ।
नमस्-कृ-त्वा भूयः एव आह कृष्णम् स-गद्गदम् भीत-भीतः प्र-नम्-य ॥

*samjaya uvāca*

*etac chrutvā vacanaṁ keśavasya*
*kṛtāñjalir vepamānaḥ kirīṭī* ।
*namaskṛtvā bhūya evā 'ha kṛṣṇaṁ*
*sagadgadam bhītabhītaḥ praṇamya* ॥

*tvaṁ ādidevaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇas*
*tvam asya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam* ।
*vettā 'si vedyaṁ ca paraṁ ca dhāma*
*tvayā tataṁ viśvam ananta rūpa* ॥

त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou आदिदेवः *ādi devaḥ* the primal God पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* Purusha पुराणः *purāṇaḥ* the ancient त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अस्य *asya* of (this) विश्वस्य *viśvasya* of universe परम् *paraṁ* the supreme निधानम् *nidhānaṁ* refuge वेत्ता *vettā* knower असि *asi* (thou) art वेद्यम् *vedyaṁ* to be known च *ca* and परम् *paraṁ* the supreme च *ca* and धाम *dhāma* abode त्वया *tvayā* by thee ततम् *tataṁ* is pervaded विश्वम् *viśvaṁ* the universe अनन्तरूप *ananta rūpa* O being of infinite forms

**You are the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha; You are the Supreme Abode of all this, You are the Knower and the knowable and the Supreme Abode; this universe is pervaded by You, O Being of infinite form.** **38**

The Lord is *ādideva* or the Primal God because of His being the source of everything sentient and insentient. The *Puri* of *Prakriti* is His construction; and He being its oldest occupant, He is *Purāṇa Purusha.* When *Prakriti* is withdrawn during *Pralaya,* it goes to rest in Him. For this reason He is called *Param Nidhānam* or the Supreme Abode.

The sun throws light and reveals the earth that has come out from itself. Akin to this, the Lord is the cognizer and the object cognized. The sea is the abode, it being the originator, the sustainer and the withholder of the waves. Even so, the Lord is the Supreme Abode, *Param Dhāma,* of the universe.

स्थाने हृषीक-ईश तव प्र-कीर्त्या जगत् प्र-हृष्यति अनु-रज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशः द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्ध-संघाः ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*sthāne hṛṣīkeśa tava prakīrtyā*
*jagat prahṛṣyaty anurajyate ca* ।
*rakṣāṁsi bhītāni diśo dravanti*
*sarve namasyanti ca siddhasaṁghāḥ* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

स्थाने *sthāne* it is meet हृषीकेश *hṛṣīkeśa* O Hrishikesa तव *tava* thy प्रकीर्त्या *prakīrtyā* in praise जगत् *jagat* the world प्रहृष्यति *prahṛṣyati* is delighted अनुरज्यते *anu rajyate* rejoices च *ca* and रक्षांसि *rakṣāmsi* the Rakshasas भीतानि *bhītāni* in fear दिशः *diśaḥ* to all quarters द्रवन्ति *dravanti* fly सर्वे *sarve* all नमस्यन्ति *namasyanti* bow (to thee) च *ca* and सिद्धसंघाः *siddha saṁghāḥ* the hosts of Siddhas

**Arjuna said:**

**It is meet, O Hrishikesa, that the world is delighted and rejoices in Your praise; Rakshasas fly in fear in all directions, and all the hosts of Siddhas bow to You. 36**

If a rustic from a remote rural area be brought into a huge factory with gigantic machinery, he would get terrified and run away. People with some knowledge about the modern machines would stand by and look on the huge machines at work, while the mechanics and technicians would be busily working in that factory.

Arjuna's vision of the cosmic form of Iswara is parallel to this. The Rakshasas who are ignorant

नमः पुरस्तात् अथ पृष्ठतः ते नमः अस्-तु ते सर्वतः एव सर्व ।
अन्-अन्त-वीर्य अ-मित-वि-क्रमः त्वम् सर्वम् सम्-आप्-नोषि ततः अस्-सि सर्वः ॥

*namaḥ purastād atha pṛṣṭhatas te*
*namo 'stu te sarvata eva sarva* ।
*ananta vīryāmita vikramas tvaṁ*
*sarvaṁ samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvaḥ* ॥

नमः *namaḥ* salutation पुरस्तात् *purastāt* (from) before अथ *atha* also पृष्ठतः *pṛṣṭhataḥ* (from) behind ते *te* to thee नमः *namaḥ* salutation अस्तु *astu* be ते *te* to thee सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* on every side एव *eva* even सर्व *sarva* O all अनन्तवीर्य *ananta vīrya* infinite in power अमितविक्रमः *amita vikramaḥ* infinite in powers त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all समाप्नोषि *samāpnoṣi* pervadest ततः *tataḥ* wherefore असि *asi* (thou) art सर्वः *sarvaḥ* all

**Salutation to You before, salutation to You behind, salutation to You on every side, O All! Infinite in might and immeasurable in strength, You pervade all and therefore You are all. 40**

The question of seeking God does not arise to the enlightened; it is a matter of seeing and recognizing Him everywhere and in everything. Arjuna has now risen to this exalted position.

The Lord is revealing His omnipotence exuberantly through the working of the universe. A reverent recognition of it is a form of adoration offered to the Almighty. Nay, man has something more to do. The powers and resources he is gifted with, have all come from God. A proper utilization of them for public good is a potent form of prayer. It is the proper application of man's dharma. He who fails to discharge his dharma spoils his life.

**Abode of the universe; You are the Imperishable, the being and the non-being, that which is the Supreme.**

The urge to praise Iswara rises spontaneously in the minds of the enlightened ones. For, knowing and admiring are interrelated. Iswara is *Mahātman* as there is none greater than He. He is *Ananta* due to His transcending time, space and causation. He is the Lord of all the gods, their destiny being shaped by Him. As the ocean is the abode of the waves, the Lord is the abode of the universe. Brahma the Creator is the Immanent Aspect of Iswara. He is also known as Hiranyagarbha. For the convenience of our conception of him, he may be put as the sum total of the *Jivatmans*, Iswara is the primal cause of Brahma even, just as the ocean is the primal cause of all the waves put together. The manifest aspect of the universe is *sat*, the unmanifest being *asat*. Iswara is glorified as *Akshara* since no modification of any kind takes place in Him, even when the universe comes into being from Him. The Lord is not only the Immanent Reality, but He is also the Transcendental Reality. For this reason He is praised as *Param*. The glories of God are infinite. What else can the realized souls do than going into raptures and extolling Iswara? The *sadhaka* rises in spiritual stature as he indulges in the praise of the Lord.

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥ ३८

त्वम् आदि-देवः पुरुषः पुराणः त्वम् अस्य विश्वस्य परम् नि-धानम् ।
वेद्-ता अ(स्)-सि वेद्-यम् च परम् च धाम त्वया त(न्)-तम् विश्वम् अन्-अन्त-रूप ॥

thus अजानता *ajānatā* unknowing महिमानम् *mahimānam* greatness तव *tava* thy इदम् *idam* this मया *mayā* by me प्रमादात् *pramādāt* from carelessness प्रणयेन *praṇayena* due to love वा *vā* or अपि *api* even

यत् *yat* whatever च *ca* and अवहासार्थम् *avahāsārtham* for the sake of fun असत्कृतः *asatkṛtaḥ* disrespectfully असि *asi* (thou) art विहारशय्या आसनभोजनेषु *vihāra śayyā āsana bhojaneṣu* while at play, on bed, while sitting or at meals एकः *ekaḥ* (when) one अथवा *athavā* or अपि *api* even अच्युत *acyuta* O Achyuta तत् *tat* so समक्षम् *samakṣam* in company तत् *tat* that क्षामये *kṣāmaye* implore to forgive त्वाम् *tvām* thee अहम् *aham* I अप्रमेयम् *aprameyam* immeasurable

**Whatever I have rashly said from carelessness or love, addressing You as "O Krishna, O Yadava, O friend," looking on You merely as a friend, ignorant of this Your greatness; 41**

**In whatever way I may have insulted You for jest while at play, reposing, sitting or at meals, when alone, O Achyuta, or in company — that I implore You, Immeasurable One, to forgive. 42**

It is but natural that the vision of the cosmic form of Iswara brings a dramatic change in the attitude of Arjuna. His assuming a spontaneous reverent relationship with Sri Krishna is the immediate transformation that has come over him. Not only in him, but in all *sadhakas* this solemn attitude requires to be invoked and extended to the entire creation. The truth is that the Lord is manifesting Himself in all of these forms. All are therefore unknowingly cognizing fragments of His cosmic form.

The effect known as the universe is pervaded by the cause known as Iswara in His infinite forms.

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥ ३९

वायु यमः अग्निः वरुणः शश-अङ्कः प्र-जा-पति त्वम् प्र-पितामह च ।
नमः नमः ते अस्तु सहस्र-कृत्वः पुनः च भूयः अपि नमः नमः ते ॥

*vāyur yamo 'gnir varunaḥ śaśānkaḥ*
*prajāpatis tvam prapitāmahaś ca* ।
*namo namas te 'stu sahasrakrtvaḥ*
*punaś ca bhūyo 'pi namo namas te* ॥

वायु *vāyuḥ* Vayu यम *yamaḥ* Yama अग्नि *agniḥ* Agni वरुण *varunaḥ* Varuna शशाङ्कः *śaśānkaḥ* Moon प्रजापतिः *prajāpatiḥ* Prajapati त्वम् *tvam* thou प्रपितामहः *prapitāmahaḥ* great-grandfather च *ca* and नम *namaḥ* salutations नम *namaḥ* salutations ते *te* to thee अस्तु *astu* be सहस्रकृत्व *sahasra kṛtvaḥ* thousand times पुनः *punaḥ* again च *ca* and भूय *bhūyaḥ* again अपि *api* also नमः *namaḥ* salutations नम *namaḥ* salutations ते *te* to thee

**You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon, Prajapati and the Great-grandfather. Salutation, salutation to You, a thousand times, and again and again salutation to You.** 39

*Prajāpati* is the progenitor of beings Brahma the Creator is the Grandfather, he being the progenitor of the *Prajāpatis* The Lord Himself is the Great-grandfather since Brahma has come out of Him. The innumerable salutations indicate the upsurge of devotion.

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनन्तवीर्यामित विक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥ ४०

being unparalleled and His suzerainty supreme, the entire creation adores Him as the Greatest of the great and as the All-powerful.

The Lord being all in all, what should the *sadhaka* do?

**तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।**
**पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥ ४४**

तस्मात् प्र-नम्-य प्र-नि-धा-य कायम् प्र-सादये त्वाम् अहम् ईशम् ईड्यम् ।
पिता इव पुत्रस्य सखा इव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायाः अर्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥

*tasmāt praṇamya praṇidhāya kāyaṁ*
*prasādaye tvām aham īśam īḍyam* ।
*pite 'va putrasya sakhe 'va sakhyuḥ*
*priyaḥ priyāyā 'rhasi deva soḍhum* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore प्रणम्य *praṇamya* saluting प्रणिधाय *praṇidhāya* having bent कायम् *kāyaṁ* body प्रसादये *prasādaye* crave forgiveness त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee अहम् *ahaṁ* I ईशम् *īśaṁ* the Lord ईड्यम् *īḍyaṁ* adorable पिता *pitā* father इव *iva* like पुत्रस्य *putrasya* of the son सखा *sakhā* friend इव *iva* like सख्युः *sakhyuḥ* of the friend प्रियः *priyaḥ* beloved प्रियायाः *priyāyāḥ* to the beloved अर्हसि *arhasi* (thou) shouldst देव *deva* O God सोढुम् *soḍhuṁ* bear

**Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body, I implore You, adorable Lord to forgive me. Bear with me, O Lord, as a father with a son, as a friend with a friend, as a lover with his beloved. 44**

When the glory of the Lord is realized man cannot help adoring Him. That adoration spontaneously expresses itself as bowing down and prostrat-

Just as a fruit is inclusive of the pulp, the seed and the skin, Iswara is inclusive of the universe and the beings in it. In the act of adoring the Lord, the act of upholding and propitiating the beings is included. In serving the beings, the Lord is served well.

Now that Arjuna has known Sri Krishna in His true perspective, does he revise his relationship? It comes in his own words —

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात् प्रणयेन वापि ॥ ४१
यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥ ४२

सखा इति मत्वा प्रसभम् यत् उक्तम् हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखा इति ।
अ-जानता महिमानम् तव इदम् मया प्र-मादात् प्र-णयेन वा अपि ॥
यत् च अव-हास अर्थम् अ-सत्कृत असि विहार-शय्या आसन-भोजनेषु ।
एक अथ वा अपि अ-च्युत तत् समक्षम् तत् क्षामये त्वाम् अहम् अ-प्र-मेयम् ॥

*sakhe 'ti matvā prasabham yad uktam*
*he krsna he yādava he sakhe 'ti* ।
*ajānatā mahimānam tave 'dam*
*mayā pramādāt pranayena vā 'pi* ॥
*yac cā 'vahāsārtham asatkrto 'si*
*vihāra śayyāsana bhojanesu* ।
*eko 'thavā 'py acyuta tat samaksam*
*tat ksāmaye tvām aham aprameyam* ॥

सखा *sakhā* friend इति *iti* as मत्वा *matvā* regarding प्रसभम् *prasabham* presumptuously यत् *yat* whatever उक्तम् *uktam* said हे कृष्ण *he krsna* O Krishna हे यादव *he yādava* O Yadava हे सखा *he sakhā* O friend इति *iti*

तत् *tat* that एव *eva* only मे *me* to me दर्शय *darśaya* show देव *deva* O God रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form प्रसीद *prasīda* have mercy देवेश *deveśa* O Lord of gods जगन्निवास *jagannivāsa* O Abode of the universe

**I rejoice that I have seen what was never seen before, but my mind is confounded with fear. Show me that form only, O God; have mercy, O God of gods, O Abode of the universe.** 45

The watery expanses on the globe are endless, presenting varieties of aspects of theirs. The boisterous part is one among them. Parallel to this, in the cosmic form of Iswara, the terrific is an aspect only. This aspect in particular is shown to Arjuna in order to relieve him of his war problems. Having been enlightened in regard to his function in this inevitable catastrophe, he does not desire any further to behold that terrible vision. He pleads that he might be put in communion with the placid and pleasant aspect of the cosmic form. While the boisterous aspect is by the way, the peaceful and the blissful aspect is the norm with beings as well as with Iswara.

Brother Hari puts on the make up of a lion for the fun of it and teases his sister into fear. But when he sees the jest too much for the timid girl, he throws away the mask and reveals himself in his true form. In this wise Brahman covers Himself with *maya* and puts on a destructive and terrible form. When the veil of *maya* is removed He shines in His original calm and blissful splendour.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna now appeals for the revelation of the auspicious form quite pleasing to him :—

Cultivation of reverent attitude towards the entire creation is the most potent among spiritual practices.

What makes Arjuna plead for forgiveness? Let it be heard from him :—

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ ४३

पिता अस्-सि लोकस्य चर-अचरस्य त्वम् अस्य पूज्यः च गुरुः गरीयान् ।
न,त्वत्-समः अस्-ति अभि-अधिकः कुतः अन्यः लोक-त्रये अपि अ-प्रतिम-प्रभाव ॥

*pitā 'si lokasya carācarasya*
*tvam asya pūjyaś ca gurur garīyān* ।
*na tvatsamo 'sty abhyadhikaḥ kuto 'nyo*
*lokatraye 'py apratima prabhāva* ॥

पिता *pitā* father असि *asi* (thou) art लोकस्य *lokasya* of the world चर अचरस्य *cara acarasya* of the moving and unmoving त्वम् *tvam* thou अस्य *asya* of this पूज्यः *pūjyaḥ* to be revered च *ca* and गुरुः *guruḥ* the Guru गरीयान् *garīyān* weightier न *na* not त्वत्समः *tvatsamaḥ* equal to thee अस्ति *asti* is अभ्यधिकः *abhyadhikaḥ* surpassing कुतः *kutaḥ* whence अन्यः *anyaḥ* other लोकत्रये *loka traye* in the three worlds अपि *api* also अप्रतिमप्रभाव *apratima prabhāva* O being of unequalled power

**You are the Father of this world moving and unmoving. You are to be adored by this world, You the Greatest Guru; none there exists, who is equal to You in the three worlds; who then can excel You, O Being of unequalled power? 43**

If there were more than one Iswara, there is the possibility of one counteracting the doings of another. That would lead to confusion and chaos. But Iswara

The Lord accordingly resumes His benign form and consoles His disturbed companion:—

**Arjuna's Blessed Privilege — 47-49**

श्री भगवानुवाच

मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥ ४७

मया प्रसद्-तेन तव अर्जुन इदम् रूपम् परम् दर्शि-इतम् आत्म-योगात् ।
तेजः-मयम् विश्वम् अन्-अन्तम् आद्यम् यत् मे त्वत् अन्येन न दृष्ट-पूर्वम् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*mayā prasannena tavā 'rjune 'daṁ*
*rūpaṁ paraṁ darśitam ātmayogāt* ।
*tejomayaṁ viśvam anantam ādyaṁ*
*yan me tvad anyena na dṛṣṭapūrvam* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

मया *mayā* by me प्रसन्नेन *prasannena* gracious तव *tava* to thee अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna इदम् *idaṁ* this रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form परम् *paraṁ* supreme दर्शितम् *darśitaṁ* has been shown आत्मयोगात् *ātma yogāt* by my own yoga power तेजोमयम् *tejomayaṁ* full of splendour विश्वम् *viśvaṁ* universal अनन्तम् *anantaṁ* endless आद्यम् *ādyaṁ* primeval यत् *yat* which मे *me* of me त्वत् *tvat* from thee अन्येन *anyena* by another न *na* not दृष्टपूर्वम् *dṛṣṭa pūrvaṁ* seen before

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Graciously have I shown you, O Arjuna, this Supreme Form, by My yoga power, this resplendent, universal, infinite, primeval, which none but you has ever seen. 47**

ing Vast difference in power and wealth among the worldly people creates a gulf between man and man. But the greatness of God is no hindrance to the insignificant man gaining free access to Him. Arjuna feels instinctively the filial love of the son for the father. But there is a certain amount of reverent aloofness of the son from the father. That handicap is removed by raising the relationship to that between two intimate friends moving on terms of equality. This love is further made charming and sweet by converting it into the dotage of the lovers upon each other. None is dearer to man than God.

When man develops ecstatic love, he feels God as his own. It is like the Gopis of Brindavan identifying themselves with Sri Krishna. They always claimed Him as Gopinatha and not as Jagannatha.

—Sri Ramakrishna

**Arjuna Pleads for the Vision of Gentle Form — 45-46**

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ ४५

अ-दृश्-त-पूर्वम् हृषितः अस्-मि दृश्-त्वा भयेन च प्र-व्यथितम् मनः मे ।
तत् एव मे .दर्श्-अय देव रूपम् प्र-सीद देव-ईश जगद्-नि-वास ॥

*adṛstapūrvam hṛsito 'smi dṛṣṭvā*
*bhayena ca pravyathitaṁ mano me* ।
*tad eva me darśaya deva rūpaṁ*
*prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa* ॥

अदृष्टपूर्वम् *adṛstapūrvam* what was never seen before हृषितः *hṛsitaḥ* delighted अस्मि *asmi* (I) am दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen भयेन *bhayena* with fear च *ca* and प्रव्यथितम् *pravyathitam* is distressed मनः *manaḥ* mind मे *me* my

**Neither by the study of the Vedas, nor by Yajnas, nor by gifts, nor by rituals, nor by severe penances, can this form of Mine be seen in the world of men by any one else but you, O hero of the Kurus. 48**

All the meritorious acts mentioned herein are good in themselves. They are all conducive to spiritual growth as well. But in the practice of all of them, egoism prevails to some extent at least. Individualism, however refined it may be, has its own limitations. But when a devotee gives himself over to the Lord and depends on His grace, the reward that comes to him is abundantly great.

One man gets intoxicated with one peg of liquor while another needs an overdose of it before he becomes tipsy. But when intoxicated both are in the same state. In this way some get into bliss with a ray of realization while the others do so after coming into the blaze of the Divine Presence. However, the effect is the same in both the cases.

—Sri Ramakrishna

**मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।**
**व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥ ४९**

मा ते व्यथा मा च वि-मूढ-भावः दृश्-त्वा रूपम् घोरम् ईदृक् मम इदम् ।
वि-अप-इत-भीः प्रीत-मनाः पुनः त्वम् तत् एव मे रूपम् इदम् प्र-पश्य ॥

*mā te vyathā mā ca vimūḍhabhāvo*
*dṛṣṭvā rūpaṁ ghoram īdṛṅ mame 'dam* ।
*vyapetabhīḥ prītamanāḥ punas tvaṁ*
*tad eva me rūpam idaṁ prapaśya* ॥

मा *mā* not ते *te* thee व्यथा *vyathā* fear मा *mā* not च *ca* and विमूढभावः *vimūḍha bhāvaḥ* bewildered state दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form घोरम् *ghoraṁ* terrible ईदृक् *īdṛk* such मम *mama* my इदम् *idaṁ* this

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तमिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ ४६

किरीटिनम् गदिनम् चक्र-हस्तम् इच्छामि त्वाम् द्रष्टुम् अहम् तथा एव ।
तेन एव रूपेण चतुर्-भुजेन सहस्र-बाहो भव विश्व-मूर्ते ॥

*kirīṭinaṁ gadinaṁ cakrahastam*
*icchāmi tvāṁ draṣṭum ahaṁ tathai 'va* ।
*tenai 'va rūpeṇa caturbhujena*
*sahasrabāho bhava viśvamūrte* ॥

किरीटिनम् *kirīṭinam* crowned गदिनम् *gadinaṁ* bearing a mace चक्रहस्तम् *cakra hastaṁ* with a discus in the hand इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) desire त्वाम् *tvām* thee द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭum* to see अहम् *ahaṁ* I तथा एव *tathā eva* as before तेन एव *tena eva* that same रूपेण *rūpena* of form चतुर्भुजेन *caturbhujena* (by) four-armed सहस्रबाहो *sahasra bāho* O thousand-armed भव *bhava* be विश्वमूर्ते *viśva mūrte* O universal form

**I desire to see you as before, crowned, bearing a mace and a discus in the hand, in Your former form only, having four arms, O thousand-armed, O Universal Form.** 46

The human beings are two-armed. God is conceived of as four-armed as an indication of His superhuman powers. It is mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana that Sri Krishna had on a few occasions revealed Himself as the four-armed Vishnu to some of His devotees. Even with the two arms He was ever manifesting superhuman and divine powers. Arjuna now says that this human form would be quite sufficient and highly desirable for their normal relationship.

*yāmāsa* showed भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again आश्वासयामास *āśvāsayāmāsa* consoled च *ca* and भीतम् *bhītaṁ* who was terrified एनम् *enaṁ* him भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having become पुनः *punaḥ* again सौम्यवपुः *saumya vapuḥ* of gentle form महात्मा *mahātmā* the great-souled one

**Sanjaya said:**

**Having spoken thus to Arjuna, Vasudeva showed again His own form; and the great-souled One assuming His gentle form consoled him who was terrified. 50**

*Vāsudeva* is the son of *Vasudeva* and Devaki. While being born as their son, He showed His benign and soul-captivating form to His parents, then in imprisonment. The Lord strikes terror only to the extent necessary to tame the strayed into the right path. He is *Mahātma* because of this noble act of reclamation.

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥ ५१

दृष्-त्वा इदम् मानुषम् रूपम् तव सौम्यम् जन-अर्दन ।
इदानीम् अस्-मि सम्-वृत्-तः स-चेताः प्रकृतिम् गतः ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*dṛṣṭve 'daṁ mānuṣaṁ rūpaṁ tava saumyaṁ janārdana* ।
*idānīm asmi saṁvṛttaḥ sacetāḥ prakṛtiṁ gataḥ* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

दृष्ट्वा *dṛṣṭvā* having seen इदम् *idaṁ* this मानुषम् *mānuṣaṁ* human रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form तव *tava* thy सौम्यम्

Spiritual exuberance and the experience thereof is the common inheritance of all. Exclusiveness and favouritism have no place in it. Arjuna is beset with a worldly problem. The solution for it has to be found on the background of the cosmic functioning of the Lord. Along with it a peep into the beyond also is provided for him by the grace of the Almighty. Each man finds the reflection of his own face in the mirror. Similarly Arjuna finds problems peculiar to himself solved in the cosmic setting. His peculiar case is no doubt a solitary incident fittingly solved by the Lord.

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।
एवं रूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥ ४८

न वेद-यज्ञ-अधि-अयनैः न दानैः न च क्रियाभिः न तपः-भिः उग्रैः ।
एवम्-रूपः शक्-यः अहम् नृ-लोके द्रष्टुम् त्वत् अन्येन कुरु-प्र-वीर ॥

*na vedayajñādhyayanair na dānair*
*na ca kriyābhir na tapobhir ugraiḥ* ।
*evaṁ rūpaḥ śakya aham nṛloke*
*drastum tvad anyena kurupravīra* ॥

न *na* not वेदयज्ञ अध्ययनैः *veda yajña adhyayanaiḥ* by the study of the Vedas and of Yajna न *na* not दानैः *dānaiḥ* by gifts न *na* not च *ca* and क्रियाभिः *kriyābhiḥ* by rituals न *na* not तपोभिः *tapobhiḥ* by austerities उग्रैः *ugraiḥ* severe एवं रूपः *evaṁ rūpaḥ* in such form शक्यः *śakyaḥ* (am) possible अहम् *ahaṁ* I नृलोके *nṛloke* in the world of men द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭuṁ* to be seen त्वत् *tvat* than thee अन्येन *anyena* by another कुरुप्रवीर *kurupravīra* O great hero of the Kurus

The Blessed Lord said:

**Very hard it is, indeed, to see this form of Mine which you have seen. Even the Devas are very eager to see this form. 52**

In the scale of evolution the Devas are superior to the human beings. But their knowledge of Iswara is in no way higher than that of the human aspirants. In the spiritual enlightenment that Arjuna has had just now, he has excelled the Devas who are also ardently trying to probe into the mystery of the Supreme.

What are the paths pursued by the *sadhakas* for the attainment of Iswara? The elucidation follows:—

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥ ५३

न अहम् वेदैः न तपसा न दानेन न च इज्यया ।
शक्-यः एवंविधः द्रष्टुम् दृष्-तवान् अस्-सि माम् यथा ॥

*nā 'haṁ vedair na tapasā na dānena na ce 'jyayā* ।
*śakya evaṁvidho draṣṭuṁ dṛṣṭavān asi māṁ yathā* ॥

न *na* not अहम् *ahaṁ* I वेदैः *vedaiḥ* by the Vedas न *na* not तपसा *tapasā* by austerity न *na* not दानेन *dānena* by gift न *na* not च *ca* and इज्यया *ijyayā* by sacrifice शक्यः *śakyaḥ* (am) possible एवंविधः *evaṁ vidhaḥ* like this द्रष्टुम् *draṣṭuṁ* to be seen दृष्टवानसि *dṛṣṭavānasi* (thou) hast seen माम् *māṁ* me यथा *yathā* as

**Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by gift, nor by sacrifice can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me. 53**

व्यपेतभीः *vyapetabhīḥ* with (thy) fear dispelled प्रीतमनाः *prītamanāḥ* with gladdened heart पुनः *punaḥ* again त्वम् *tvam* thou तत् *tat* that एव *eva* even मे *me* my रूपम् *rūpam* form इदम् *idam* this प्रपश्य *prapaśya* behold

**Be not afraid nor bewildered on seeing this terrific form of Mine; free from fear and delighted at heart, do you again see this My former form. 49**

The seafarer is delighted when the boisterous waters become pacified. The child is pleased when mother's anger changes into affection. The *Jivatman* is transported with joy when he beholds his terror-striking God resume His benediction-showering form.

The Wonted Serene Form — 50-51

सञ्जय उवाच

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥ ५०

इति अर्जुनम् वासु-देवः तथा उक्त्वा स्वकम् रूपम् दर्शयाम्-आस भूयः ।
आ-श्वास्-अयाम्-आस च भीतम् एनम् भू-त्वा पुनः सौम्य-वपुः महा-आत्मा ॥

*saṁjaya uvāca*

*ity arjunam vāsudevas tatho 'ktvā*
*svakam rūpam darśayām āsa bhūyaḥ* ।
*āśvāsayām āsa ca bhītam enam*
*bhūtvā punaḥ saumyavapur mahātmā* ॥

संजय उवाच *saṁjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said:

इति *iti* thus अर्जुनम् *arjunam* to Arjuna वासुदेवः *vāsudevaḥ* Vasudeva तथा *tathā* so उक्त्वा *uktvā* having spoken स्वकम् *svakam* his own रूपम् *rūpam* form दर्शयामास *darśa-*

From the way in which the subordinates and attendants conduct themselves in a palace, the presence of the king in it can be inferred. One should not be satisfied with that inference. Seeing the king in person is superior to believing in his presence. There is a state greater than seeing the sovereign. Contact and communion with him is what is wanted. *Ananya bhakti* takes the devotee through all of these stages in his pursuit of the Lord. He feels first the presence of the Divine; he gets the vision of the Lord next; then he moves intimately with Him until unison is reached. Unswerving devotion provides all these possibilities.

Many have heard of milk. Those who have seen it are lesser in number. The partakers of milk are lesser still. Even such is the contact of man with God.

A talk arose whether man can see God with his physical eyes. No, He cannot be perceived with fleshy eyes. When *bhakti* is practised, the *sadhaka* develops a superior sense organ, which has the power to see and hear supermundane things. With that spiritual eye, God is beheld and the devotee is commingled with Him.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

What should the *sadhaka* do then? The injunction comes :—

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ ५५

मद्-कर्म-कृत् मद्-परमः मद्-भक्तः सङ्ग-वर्जितः ।
निर्-वैरः सर्व-भूतेषु यः सः माम् एति पाण्डव ॥

*matkarmakṛn matparamo madbhaktaḥ saṅgavarjitaḥ* ।
*nirvairaḥ sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ sa mām eti pāṇḍava* ॥

*saumyaṁ* gentle जनार्दन *janārdana* O Janardana इदानीम् *idānīṁ* now अस्मि *asmi* am संवृत्तः *saṁvṛttaḥ* composed सचेताः *sacetāḥ* with mind प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtiṁ* to nature गतः *gataḥ* restored

**Arjuna said:**

**Having seen this Your gentle human form, O Janardana, I am now composed and am restored to my own nature. 51**

The fish in the troubled water is ill at ease; it regains its normalcy when water becomes calm. Even so the *Jivatman* cannot remain composed when put in touch with the terrific aspect of Iswara. Arjuna bears evidence to this fact.

**The Message of the Cosmic Form — 52-55**

श्री भगवानुवाच

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥ ५२

सु-दुर्-दर्शम् इदम् रूपम् दृष्-तवान् अस्-सि यत् मम ।
देवाः अपि अस्य रूपस्य नित्यम् दर्शन-काङ्क्षिणः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*sudurdarśaṁ idaṁ rūpam dṛṣṭavān asi yan mama* ।
*devā apy asya rūpasya nityaṁ darśana kāṅkṣiṇaḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

सुदुर्दर्शम् *sudur darśam* very hard to see इदम् *idaṁ* this रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form दृष्टवानसि *dṛṣṭavānasi* thou hast seen यत् *yat* which मम *mama* my देवाः *devāḥ* gods अपि *api* also अस्य *asya* (of) this रूपस्य *rūpasya* of form नित्यम् *nityaṁ* ever दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः *darśana kāṅkṣiṇaḥ* (are) desirous to behold

Do you know what kind of devotion we ought to have towards our Maker? The love of a chaste wife to her husband, the attachment of a miser to his hoarded wealth, the craving of a worldling for sense-pleasure — all these rolled into one and directed towards the Lord make Bhakti. We shall verily gain Him in this way.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नाम
एकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde viśvarūpa darśanayogo nāma ekādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eleventh discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE VISION OF THE COSMIC FORM

The Lord has repeatedly made it plain that these meritorious acts are at best conducive to the purification of the mind These are no more useful for the attainment of the Lord than a diligent search is for a gold coin, on which the concerned man happens to be standing!

Which then is the direct and sure path? The statement is —

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ ५४

भक्त्या तु अन्-अन्यया शक् य अहम् एवविध अर्जुन ।
ज्ञा तुम् द्रष्टुम् च तद् त्वेन प्रवेष्टुम् च परम्-तप ॥

*bhaktyā tv ananyayā śakya aham evamvidho 'rjuna |*
*jñātum drastum ca tattvena pravestum ca paramtapa ||*

भक्त्या *bhaktyā* by devotion तु *tu* indeed अनन्यया *ananyayā* single-minded शक्य *śakyah* (am) possible अहम् *aham* I एवविध *evam vidhah* of this form अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna ज्ञातुम् *jñātum* to be known द्रष्टुम् *drastum* to be seen च *ca* and तत्त्वेन *tattvena* in reality प्रवेष्टुम् *pravestum* to be entered into च *ca* and परतप *param tapa* O Parantapa (O scorcher of thy foes)

**But by unswerving devotion can I, of this form, *be known and seen in reality and also entered into, O* scorcher of foes.** **54**

*Ananya bhakti* is unswerving devotion In this state, the *sadhaka* recognizes nothing but Iswara He makes over his entire being to the Lord All that he contacts through the senses and the intellect is He Whatever he does is the Lord's activity

is both with and without attributes. Of these two aspects of His, which is better suited for worship? This is the point raised herein for clarification.

श्री भगवानुवाच

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ २

मयि आ-वेश्य मनः ये माम् नित्य(म्) युक्ताः उप-आसते ।
श्रद्धया परया उप-इताः ते मे युज्-त-तमाः म(न्)-ताः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*mayy āveśya mano ye māṁ nitya yuktā upāsate* ।
*śraddhayā parayo 'petās te me yuktatamā matāḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

मयि *mayi* on me आवेश्य *āveśya* fixing मनः *manaḥ* the mind ये *ye* who माम् *māṁ* me नित्ययुक्ताः *nitya yuktāḥ* ever steadfast उपासते *upāsate* worship श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith परया *parayā* (with) supreme उपेताः *upetāḥ* endowed ते *te* these मे *me* of me युक्ततमाः *yukta tamāḥ* the best versed in yoga मताः *matāḥ* (in my) opinion

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Those who have fixed their minds on Me, and who, ever steadfast and endowed with supreme Sraddha, worship Me — them do I consider perfect in yoga.** **2**

The Lord is having the cosmos for His physical body. He is Parameswara, *Saguna Brahman.* He rules remaining immanent in the universe. He is the Lord of the yogis, the Omniscient. His devotees are they who have dedicated themselves to His worship. They are free from attachment, aversion

मत्कर्मकृत् *mat karmakrt* does actions for me मत्परमः *mat paramaḥ* looks on me as the supreme मद्भक्तः *mad bhaktaḥ* is devoted to me सङ्गवर्जितः *saṅga varjitaḥ* is freed from attachment निर्वैरः *nir vairaḥ* without enmity सर्वभूतेषु *sarva bhūteṣu* towards all creatures यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* he माम् *māṁ* to me एति *eti* goes पाण्डव *pāndava* O Pandava

**He who does work for Me, who looks on Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who is without hatred for any being, he comes to Me, O Pandava. 55**

It is in the nature of beings to work. The make of an individual is known from the work he engages himself in. To work for oneself is the way of the world. The devotee however works not for himself but for the Lord.

Worldly people strive for prosperity, power and enjoyment. The devotee strives to attain the Lord Supreme.

The mind thrives getting attached to one thing or another. But it does not cling to two things at the same time. As it grows in devotion to the Lord, its attachment to the world wanes.

Hatred is born of rivalry or mutual exclusion. But these base motives have no place in the devotee's attempt to recognize the immanency of God in all beings.

Man gains that to which he applies himself. By giving himself to the Lord, he gets Him in return, and there is no gain superior to this.

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ ४

सम्-नि-यम्-य इन्द्रिय-ग्रामम् सर्वत्र सम-बुद्धयः ।
ते प्र-आप्-नुवन्ति माम् एव सर्व-भूत-हिते र(म्)-ताः ॥

*saṁniyamye 'ndriyagrāmaṁ sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ* ।
*te prāpnuvanti mām eva sarva bhūta hite ratāḥ* ॥

संनियम्य *saṁniyamya* having restrained इन्द्रियग्रामम् *indriyagrāmaṁ* the aggregate of the senses सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere समबुद्धयः *samabuddhayaḥ* even-minded ते *te* they प्राप्नुवन्ति *prāpnuvanti* obtain माम् *māṁ* me एव *eva* only सर्वभूतहिते *sarva bhūta hite* in the welfare of all beings रताः *ratāḥ* rejoicers

**Having restrained all the senses, even-minded everywhere, engaged in the welfare of all beings—verily they also come unto Me.** 4

*Nirguna Brahman* is indeterminate Pure Consciousness. It can be arrived at by eliminating all obstructive modifications which are characteristic of *Prakriti*. *Aksharam* is the Imperishable. The universe of form appears and disappears; whereas Pure Consciousness is ever Itself.

*Anirdesyam* means the Indefinable. It cannot be defined by comparison as there is nothing similar to It.

*Avyaktam* means the Unmanifest. The manifest is that which can be cognized with the aid of the senses. But no sense organ can have any access to Pure Consciousness. As such It is unmanifest.

*Sarvatragam* means the Omnipresent. A lump of ice buried at the bottom of the sea, remains ever

# भक्तियोगः

## BHAKTI YOGA — THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

## CHAPTER XII

Brahman with and without Attributes — The Worship of Saguna Brahman — The Devotee's Divine Traits

**Brahman—with and without Attributes — 1 5**

अर्जुन उवाच

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ १

एवम् सतत(म्) युक्ता ये भक्ता त्वाम् परि-उप-आसते ।
ये च अपि अ क्षरम् अ-वि-अक्तम् तेषाम् के योग-विद्-तमा ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*evam satatayuktā ye bhaktās tvām paryupāsate* ।
*ye cā 'py akṣaram avyaktam teṣām ke yogavittamāḥ* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said

एवम् *evam* thus सततयुक्ता *satata yuktāḥ* eversteadfast ये *ye* those भक्ता *bhaktāḥ* devotees त्वाम् *tvām* thee पर्युपासते *paryupāsate* worship ये *ye* those च *ca* and अपि *api* also अक्षरम् *akṣaram* the imperishable अव्यक्तम् *avyaktam* the unmanifested तेषाम् *teṣām* of these के *ke* which योगवित्तमा *yoga vittamāḥ* better versed in yoga

**Arjuna said:**

**Those devotees who, ever steadfast, worship You thus, and those again who worship the Imperishable, the Unmanifest — which of these are better versed in yoga? 1**

At the conclusion of chapter eleven the adoration of the Supreme was advocated But Brahman

runs after the pleasant nor recoils from the painful; he remains unaffected by both of them. Does the *sadhaka* reduce himself then to the position of a corpse which lies unaffected by pleasure and pain? No, he raises himself to even-mindedness which is found in him only who is ethically and spiritually evolved. This attitude again does not mean passiveness. It expresses itself in the form of service to all beings, recognizing Divinity in them. When the *sadhaka's* mind flows out in this way, cognizing Godhood everywhere, it is to be regarded as the worship of Brahman.

When a bell is rung, each stroke has a sound-form of its own. But the formless sound is also heard for a while after stopping the striking. Similarly God is both with form and without form.

— Sri Ramakrishna

If both the ways of worship are one and the same, may one adopt any method according to one's liking? No, one should not; for :—

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ ५

क्लेशः अधिक-तरः तेषाम् अ-वि-अक्त-आ-सक्त-चेतसाम् ।
अ-वि-अक्ताः हि गतिः दुःखम् देह-वद्भिः अव-आप्-य-ते ॥

*kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām avyaktāsakta cetasām* ।
*avyaktā hi gatir duḥkhaṁ dehavadbhir avāpyate* ॥

क्लेशः *kleśaḥ* the trouble अधिकतरः *adhikataraḥ* (is) greater तेषाम् *teṣām* of those अव्यक्त आसक्त चेतसाम् *avyakta āsakta cetasām* whose minds are set on the unmanifested अव्यक्ताः *avyaktāḥ* the unmanifested हि *hi* for गतिः *gatiḥ* goal दुःखम् *duḥkham* (with) pain देहवद्भिः

and angularities Thought of the Lord alone dominates their hearts day and night They live for the service of the Lord They are therefore perfect yogis

It is quite all right to meditate on God viewing Him as formless But do not entertain the thought that only your own conception of God is correct and that the beliefs of the others are erroneous To meditate on Him as with form is also a method You persevere staunchly in your path until you reach the realization of God After that, you will come to know that all paths lead to the same goal

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Are they not yogis, who take to the adoration of the Attributeless Absolute Reality—the *Nirguna Brahman?* The answer is given —

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्य च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुव ॥ ३

ये तु अ-क्षरम् अ-निर् देश्यम् अ-वि अक्तम् परि-उप-आसते ।
सर्वत्र-गम् अ चिन्त्यम् च कूट-स्थम् अ-चलम् ध्रुवम् ॥

*ye tv aksaram anirdeśyam avyaktam paryupāsate ।*
*sarvatragam acintyam ca kūtastham acalam dhruvam*॥

ये *ye* who तु *tu* verily अक्षरम् *aksaram* the imperishable अनिर्देश्यम् *anirdeśyam* the indefinable अव्यक्तम् *avyaktam* the unmanifested पर्युपासते *paryupāsate* worship सर्वत्रगम् *sarvatragam* the omnipresent अचिन्त्यम् *acintyam* the unthinkable च *ca* and कूटस्थम् *kūtastham* the unchangeable अचलम् *acalam* the immovable ध्रुवम् *dhruvam* the eternal

**But those who worship the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the Immovable, the Eternal — 3**

*ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi mayi saṁnyasya matparāḥ* ।
*ananyenai 'va yogena māṁ dhyāyanta upāsate* ॥

ये *ye* who तु *tu* but सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* all कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions मयि *mayi* in me संन्यस्य *saṁnyasya* renouncing मत्पराः *mat parāḥ* regarding me as the supreme goal अनन्येन *ananyena* single-minded एव *eva* even योगेन *yogena* with yoga माम् *māṁ* me ध्यायन्तः *dhyāyantaḥ* meditating उपासते *upāsate* worship

**But those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in Me, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, meditating on Me with single-minded yoga —** 6

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ ७

तेषाम् अहम् सम्-उद्-हर्ता मृत्यु-सम्-सार-सागरात् ।
भवामि न-चिरात् पार्थ मयि आ-वेशित-चेतसाम् ॥

*teṣāṁ ahaṁ samuddhartā mṛtyu saṁsāra sāgarāt* ।
*bhavāmi nacirāt pārtha mayy āveśita cetasām* ॥

तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* for them अहम् *ahaṁ* I समुद्धर्ता *samuddhartā* the saviour मृत्युसंसारसागरात् *mṛtyu saṁsāra sāgarāt* out of the ocean of the mortal Samsara भवामि *bhavāmi* (I) become न चिरात् *na cirāt* ere long पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha मयि *mayi* in me आवेशितचेतसाम् *āveśita cetasāṁ* of those whose minds are set

**For them whose thought is set on Me, I become very soon, O Partha, the deliverer from the ocean of the mortal Samsara.** 7

The ignorant man who segregates himself from the Whole which is Brahman invites complication and trouble to his earthly career. He, on the other

unmanifest and uncognized. Is it because of concealment somewhere in this way that Brahman is unmanifest? No, there is nothing to hide It, the Omnipresent. Space is negated in Brahman. A huge mountain perceived in dream exists in the space created by the dreaming mind. But in wakefulness the dream space is negated. Similarly the space in the universe is negated in Brahman, who is Omnipresent.

*Achintyam* means the Unthinkable. Mind thinks of the good and bad and feels happy or miserable. Brahman does not lend Itself to be conceived by the mind in this way. It is the Wakefulness throwing light on the mind, but inaccessible to it.

*Kūṭastham* means the Unchangeable. The word *Kūṭa* connotes the painful and impermanent phenomenal existence. The permanent basis to this changing existence is *Kūṭastha*, the Unchangeable Brahman.

*Achalam* means the Immovable. The moving clouds are supported by the wind which in turn is moving in its own way. But that kind of relative movement is not in Brahman. It is constant.

*Dhruvam* means the Eternal. *ākāsa* which is the background of the wind and clouds is constant; it does not move. But in *Pralaya* this *ākāsa* does not exist. From the immovable state it goes into the state of dissolution. Brahman does not suffer from that feature. It is the Eternal.

The *sadhaka* who is competent to adore the Formless Reality has the following attainments. He has complete mastery over the senses. He neither

placed himself bodily. Man verily is where his mind is. There are those who live in hell on earth; and there are those others who make a heaven of this earth. It is the mind of man that makes the heaven and the hell. When this mind is made over to God, man is then verily in the Divine Presence. The Lord says there is no doubt about this; the devotee can verify this verity for himself.

Man is born with two tendencies, *Vidya guna* and *Avidya guna*—the noble and the base, dormant in him. The former leads him Godward and the latter makes him earth-bound. In babyhood both the tendencies are in equilibrium, as if equally distributed in the two scales of a balance. If he grows in the life in the senses, the scale of worldliness goes down with that base weight. But if he emerges in spirituality, the scale in him of Godliness goes down towards Iswara with that holy weight.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What has that *Sadhaka* to do, whose mind is not staunch and steady in the pursuit of God? The injunction comes :—

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ।। ९

अथ चित्तम् सम्-आ-धा-तुम् न शक्-नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।
अभि-आस-योगेन ततः माम् इच्छ आप्-तुम् धनम्-जय ॥

*atha cittaṁ samādhātuṁ na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram |*
*abhyāsa yogena tato mām icchā 'ptuṁ dhanaṁjaya ||*

अथ *atha* if चित्तम् *cittaṁ* the mind समाधातुम् *samādhātuṁ* to fix न *na* not शक्नोषि *śaknoṣi* (thou) art able मयि *mayi* in me स्थिरम् *sthiraṁ* steadily अभ्यासयोगेन *abhyāsa yogena* by the yoga of constant practice ततः *tataḥ* then माम् *māṁ* me इच्छ *iccha* wish आप्तुम् *āptuṁ* to reach धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* O Dhananjaya

*dehavadbhih* for the embodied अवाप्यते *avāpyate* is reached

**Greater is their difficulty whose minds are set on the Unmanifested, for the goal of the Unmanifested is very hard for the embodied to reach. 5**

Though the goal is the same, the worship of God without form is very difficult for the *sadhaka* soaked in body-consciousness As he thinks of himself with form he cannot help thinking of his God also as with form The worship of Saguna Brahman is easy He who adores Nirguna Brahman has to be free from body-feeling right from the beginning. But the attainment of that state is not possible for all The spiritually advanced soul alone rises to that level *The easy and natural course for the* ordinary *sadhaka* is to proceed with the worship of God with form

The *Jnani* or the realized soul says "*Aham Brahmasmi*—I am Brahman" But the body bound man should not say so. It is harmful to him to say "I am Brahman" when actually he is the body He deceives himself and the world by such a statement

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the *sadhaka* proceed with the worship of Iswara? The way is shown —

**The Worship of Saguna Brahman — 6-12**

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ ६

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सम्-नि-अस्-य मद्-परा ।
अन्-अन्येन एव योगेन माम् ध्यायन्त उप-अस्-अते ॥

अभि-आसे अपि अ-समर्थः अ(सु)-सि मद् कर्म(न्)-परमः भव ।
मद्-अर्थम् अपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिम् अव-आप्-स्यसि ॥

*abhyāse 'py asamartho 'si matkarmaparamo bhava |*
*mad artham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi ||*

अभ्यासे *abhyāse* in practice अपि *api* also असमर्थः *asamarthaḥ* not capable असि *asi* (thou) art मत्कर्मपरमः *matkarma paramaḥ* intent on doing actions for my sake भव *bhava* be मदर्थम् *mad arthaṁ* for my sake अपि *api* also कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions कुर्वन् *kurvan* by doing सिद्धिम् *siddhiṁ* perfection अवाप्स्यसि *avāpsyasi* thou shalt attain

**If you are unable even to practise Abhyasa-yoga, be you intent on doing actions for My sake; even by performing actions for My sake you will attain perfection. 10**

Force of habit is too strong to be altered or curbed; it drags the man along its own way. Even such a bent can be turned to advantage. While the bent is allowed to have its sway, it is utilized in the service of the Lord. A talkative man for example, may go on talking of God instead of worldly things. An active man may work hard for the glory of his Maker and not for mammon. When he becomes an instrument of the Lord in this way, no work taints him. His mind becomes gradually purified. Godhood *is* reached.

When a man changes his attitude he is freed from bondage. Whatever work takes place through man is actually the work of the Lord. "Lord, You have Your work done by me. In ignorance I feel 'I am the doer.' May I be only an instrument." Attitude of this kind emancipates the aspirant.

— Sri Ramakrishna

hand, who attunes his personal life to the cosmic functioning which is the sport of Iswara, gains in *Sreyas* and gets into the plenitude supremely above the wheel of birth and death

There are harbingers of the attainment of Godhood He in whom *Bhakti* is surging with fervour has already come to the threshold of Divinity Know it for certain that he will very soon get into union with Iswara

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the embodied one prepare oneself for the attainment of the plenitude? The answer comes :—

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ ८

मयि एव मन आ-धत्स्व मयि बुद्धिम् नि-वेश-अय ।
नि-वस्-इ-ष्य-सि मयि एव अत ऊर्ध्वम् न सम्-शयः ॥

*mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhim niveśaya* ।
*nivasiṣyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvam na saṃśayaḥ* ॥

मयि *mayi* in me एव *eva* only मनः *manaḥ* the mind आधत्स्व *ādhatsva* fix मयि *mayi* in me बुद्धिम् *buddhim* (thy) intellect निवेशय *niveśaya* place निवसिष्यसि *nivasiṣyasi* thou shalt live मयि *mayi* in me एव *eva* alone अत ऊर्ध्वम् *ata ūrdhvam* hereafter न *na* not संशयः *saṃśayaḥ* doubt

**Fix your mind on Me alone, let your thoughts dwell in Me. You will hereafter live in Me alone. Of this there is no doubt. 8**

To feel is the way of the mind and to decide is the way of the intellect. And these are the inner subtle organs of man A man's residence need not be reckoned basing on the locality where he has

does not desire to get out of it, or is incapable of outgrowing it, even for him there is a way out.

The earth-bound man is not prepared to abandon the fruits of his actions. Rather he wants to gather more and yet more fruits of his work. He ought to be told that the fruits of his karma will last long with him if he lived a life of self-control. He must be told next that more profit would come to him if he relied on God. Thirdly he must be induced into the belief that by offering a portion of his income to God and through God to His children, his income is bound to be multiplied. He learns by experience that selfishness is more paying when it is based on selflessness. An effort at abandoning the fruits of action is to be instilled into the ordinary man gradually in this way. In course of time he comes to learn that supramundane life comes of self-denial and not of self-seeking.

You cannot remain without doing work. Your inborn nature forces you to work. Therefore let your activities be carried on well. But if they were done without attachment, they take you Godward. Be not affected by the pleasure and pain ensuing from your activities. Associate them all with Iswara. Prepare yourself in this way for union with Him.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What are the indications of progress in spiritual practices? They are delineated as follows :—

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासात् ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ १२

श्रेयः हि ज्ञानम् अभि-आसात् ज्ञानात् ध्यानम् विशिष्-य-ते ।
ध्यानात् कर्म(न्)-फल-त्यागः त्यागात् शान्तिः अन्-अन्तरम् ॥

**If you are not able to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Dhananjaya, then seek to reach Me by Abhyasa-yoga. 9**

Staunch is that devotion of the *sadhaka* which does not deviate from the Lord Wavering is that devotion which oscillates between God and the world Through constant practice the mind has to be weaned away from the world It is *Abhyāsa-yoga* which is practised ceaselessly until the mind is permanently reclaimed from baseness The impossible can be made possible through constant practice Nature can be changed by nurture, it being the most effective means

A man was rearing a pet dog allowing it undue indulgence One day when he was conversing with a learned visitor the dog, as was its wont, jumped on to the lap of its master and licked his face ' This is no good," observed the new comer The remark produced a salutary effect on the man who decided then and there to train the dog properly Thenceforth, he gave a knock every time the dog jumped up to lick his face The sagacious animal was not slow to find out that the master did not approve of that act It changed its habit accordingly Similarly the unwanted desire is a wretched dog that man has fondly reared It dominates over him and depraves him woefully Repeated blows in the form of counter thoughts and ideas are the only way to rectify it

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is there any other course open to the *sadhaka*, if his mind does not submit to *Abhyāsa-yoga* ? The next course is pointed out —

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥ १०

ing the principle is better than the first man's act of ignorantly observing a formality.

A third man sits at appointed hours and meditates on the truth that it is Divinity that is manifesting Itself as the various beings that he contacts every day. What this man does is better still because he attempts to get fixed in the truth that he has intellectually grasped.

A fourth man gives a practical shape to his understanding by devotedly sharing with others whatever good things he has procured by his personal efforts. Because of the renunciation that he practises, this man stands foremost among the *sadhakas*. Heartfelt *abhyāsa*, right knowledge and good meditation are all implicitly contained in this holy act of his.

That peace immediately follows renunciation is self-evident. A few dogs fight among themselves for a few pieces of bread strewn about. Evidently there is no peace among them. Elsewhere a crow calls its comrades to share some scattered rice. They flock and eat peacefully because of their spirit of mutual help which is equivalent to the spirit of renunciation. This is an objective example. Subjectively a yogi can feel how much of peace and exuberance there are in giving away and sharing with others, than in grabbing and jealously keeping things all to oneself. Renunciation is the key to higher life.

A kite snatched a piece of meat from a butcher's shop and flew to a branch of a tree to feast on it. But immediately ensued a scramble when some other birds swooped to loot it. The kite flew from tree to tree, but there was no escape from the raiders.

But there are men who work only for themselves. They are not able to feel that they are serving the Lord. Is there no way out for such men from attachment to karma ? The way is shown :—

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥ ११

अथ एतत् अपि अ-शक्तः अ(स्)-सि कर्तुम् मद्-योगम् आ-श्रि-तः ।
सर्व-कर्म(न्)-फल-त्यागम् ततः कुरु य(म्)-त-आत्म(न्)-वान् ॥

*athai tad apy aśakto 'si kartuṁ madyogam āśritaḥ* ।
*sarva karma phala tyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān* ॥

अथ *atha* if एतत् *etat* this अपि *api* also अशक्तः *aśaktah* unable असि *asi* (thou) art कर्तुम् *kartuṁ* to do मद्योगम् *mad yogaṁ* my yoga आश्रितः *āśritaḥ* refuged in सर्वकर्मफलत्यागम् *sarva karma phala tyāgaṁ* the renunciation of the fruit of all actions ततः *tataḥ* then कुरु *kuru* do यतात्मवान् *yatātmavān* self-controlled

**If you are not able to do even this, then taking refuge in Me, abandon the fruits of all action with the self subdued. 11**

Among virtues, unselfishness is the most paying. Godhood is the reward for complete self-abnegation. When the *sadhaka* established in unselfishness meditates on God, he hastens his union with Him. But selfishness dies hard. It persists in many an unknown subtle form and causes hindrance to meditation. That hindrance has to be eliminated by *Abhyāsa-yoga.* Failing in that, all actions inherent in man may be performed for the glory of the Lord. But if the selfishness be so deep-rooted that a man

*mano buddhiḥ* with mind and intellect dedicated to me यः *yaḥ* who मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ* my devotee सः *saḥ* he मे *me* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

**He who hates no being, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from the feeling of 'I and mine,' even-minded in pain and pleasure and forbearing,** 13

**Ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled and possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me, he My devotee is dear to Me.** 14

The feeling of oneself as alien to others is born of ignorance. An aggressive form of this feeling is hatred, capable of creating poison in the system. This destructive feeling therefore has no place in the wholesome life of a devotee.

Mere avoidance of hatred is not sufficient. Stones and stone-like people do not hate; but they are none the better for it. Life should take a positive turn. Feeling oneself friendly to all is the mark of a devotee's life.

Careerists often cultivate friendship with all, with the base motive of self-advancement. But a devotee of God is he who has nothing to seek, but everything to give. He is so compassionate that he ever promotes the welfare of the others.

Of all forms of egoism, the spiritual egoism is the most dangerous one. If one develops the egoistic feeling that he is rendering spiritual help to others, he can hardly ever get out of that harmful quagmire. A true devotee is always free from the feeling of 'I and mine.'

*śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāt jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate*
*dhyānāt karmaphala tyāgas tyāgāc chāntir anantaram*

श्रेयः *śreyaḥ* better हि *hi* indeed ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge अभ्यासात् *abhyāsāt* than practice ज्ञानात् *jñānāt* than knowledge ध्यानम् *dhyānam* meditation विशिष्यते *viśiṣyate* excels ध्यानात् *dhyānāt* than meditation कर्मफल त्यागः *karma phala tyāgaḥ* the renunciation of the fruits of the actions त्यागात् *tyāgāt* from renunciation शान्तिः *śāntiḥ* peace अनन्तरम् *anantaraṁ* immediately

**Better indeed is knowledge than (formal) Abhyasa; better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruit of action; peace immediately follows renunciation. 12**

Ritualistic religious practice is called *Abhyāsa.* Many a man does it mechanically without any feeling behind it. With him it is a social habit involuntarily picked up, falling in line with what the others are doing. A conventionally pious man goes to the temple, stands before the symbol of the Deity, pays homage with folded palms, turns round on all directions palms remaining folded as they are, prostrates before the Deity and goes home with the thought that he has discharged his duty to the Maker. He knows nothing of the principles underlying his actions.

There is another man who is not given to this habitual formalism, but who knows theoretically that the cognition of the Divinity should commence at the temple, but that it should not end there. That adoration ought to be extended in all directions to aught that is. This second man's act of understand-

*yasmān no'dvijate loko lokān no'dvijate ca yaḥ |*
*harṣāmarṣabhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ ||*

यस्मात् *yasmāt* from whom न *na* not उद्विजते *udvijate* is agitated लोकः *lokaḥ* the world लोकात् *lokāt* from the world न *na* not उद्विजते *udvijate* is agitated च *ca* and यः *yaḥ* who हर्ष अमर्ष भय उद्वेगैः *harṣa amarṣa bhaya udvegaiḥ* by (from) joy, envy, fear and anxiety मुक्तः *muktaḥ* freed यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* he च *ca* and मे *me* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

**He by whom the world is not afflicted and whom the world cannot afflict, he who is free from joy, anger, fear and anxiety — he is dear to Me.** 15

The life of a devotee causes harm to nobody in the world. Directly or indirectly, everything good emanates from his life and nothing evil. Some of his doings may sometimes seem painful to others; but even in such actions intrinsic good alone prevails. What the surgeon does to the patient and the teacher to the pupil may appear hurtful; but in effect they are wholesome. A devotee in the position of Arjuna is obliged to bring about a carnage. But ultimate good to the world is contained in that seeming evil. Again, whatever harm befalls a devotee from the world is not viewed by him as an injury. Sterling is his mind which accepts all afflictions as blessings in disguise come from the Most High. The more the affliction, the greater is the devotee's delightful submission to the will of the Lord. Prahlada is the model of the super-devotee.

What is the sort of self-culture that brings forth this genuine frame of mind in the devotee? The rest

To avoid this botheration it let go the meat and perched quiet upon a bough. A sage who saw this scene learnt a lesson from the kite — Tranquillity is born of renunciation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Who again, among the devotees, becomes the favourite of the Lord? This point is clarified now —

The Devotee's Divine Traits — 13-20

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ १३
सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १४

अ-द्वेष्टा सर्व-भू-तानाम् मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्-मम निर्-अहम्-कार सम-दुःख-सुख क्षमी ॥
सम्-तुष्-त सततम् योगी य(म्)-त आत्मा दृढ-नि-चय ।
मयि अर्पित-मन-बुद्धि य मद् भक्त स मे प्रिय ॥

*adveṣṭā sarva bhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca ।*
*nirmamo nirahaṃkāraḥ samaduḥkhasukhaḥ kṣamī ॥*
*saṃtuṣṭaḥ satataṃ yogī yatātmā dṛḍhaniścayaḥ ।*
*mayy arpita manobuddhir yo madbhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ*

अद्वेष्टा *adveṣṭā* not hating सर्वभूतानाम् *sarva bhūtānām* of (to) all creatures मैत्र *maitraḥ* friendly करुण *karuṇaḥ* compassionate एव *eva* even च *ca* and निर्मम *nir mamaḥ* without mineness निरहङ्कार *nir ahaṃkāraḥ* without egoism समदुःखसुख *sama duḥkha sukhaḥ* balanced in pleasure and pain क्षमी *kṣamī* forgiving

सन्तुष्ट *saṃtuṣṭaḥ* contented सततम् *satatam* ever steady in meditation योगी *yogī* practitioner यतात्मा *yatātmā* self-controlled दृढनिश्चय *dṛḍha niścayaḥ* possessed of firm conviction मयि अर्पित मनोबुद्धि *mayi arpita*

*anapekṣaḥ śucir dakṣa udāsīno gatavyathaḥ* ।
*sarvārambha parityāgī yo madbhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ* ॥

अनपेक्षः *anapekṣaḥ* free from wants शुचिः *śuciḥ* pure दक्षः *dakṣaḥ* expert उदासीनः *udāsīnaḥ* unconcerned गतव्यथः *gatavyathaḥ* untroubled सर्व आरम्भ परित्यागी *sarva ārambha parityāgī* renouncing all undertakings यः *yaḥ* who मद्भक्तः *mad bhaktaḥ* my devotee सः *saḥ* he मे *me* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

**He who has no wants, who is pure and prompt, unconcerned, untroubled, and who is selfless in all his undertakings, he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me.** **16**

That man is free from wants who does not seek after sensual pleasures. He becomes pure to the extent he rids himself of all sensual pleasures. When the thought, word and deed of a man are not contaminated by sensuality he is established in purity. To be prompt in the discharge of duty is possible only for him who lives a disciplined life. Even a very grave crisis, suddenly sprung upon him, does not confuse his understanding; he handles it promptly as he ought to. Worldly people behave in one way towards friends and in quite another way towards foes. But the devotee of the Lord is unconcerned whether those he deals with are friends or foes. He behaves in the same simple and straightforward manner with one and all. His dealings being clean he remains untroubled by their consequences. Serving the Lord being his sole motive, he is selfless in all his undertakings. He has everything to dedicate to the Maker and His beings; he has nothing to ask of them. Therefore he is dear to the Lord.

Resulting from his benign service to others, a devotee may lose his possessions, may even be put to hardship But that ordeal causes him no pain When the world happens to speak highly of his exemplary life and work, he derives no pleasure from that praise He is even-minded in the midst of these occurrences

It is not unoften that a devotee is put to unwarranted affliction by the ignorant and wilful ones. But in such a trying circumstance a genuine devotee is always forbearing

Contentment, bliss and buoyancy ever mark a yogi for their own Being established in yoga, self-control and disciplined life become part and parcel of his being In matters spiritual he is not wavering, he is one of firm conviction His refined feelings and his clarified understanding are all centred on the Lord As the needle of a compass always points to the north, the faculties of the devotee are ever intent on Him. Such a devotee is ever dear to Him.

Does the Lord attach any value to the wealth and property dedicated to Him? Nothing whatsoever The Lord bestows His grace on that devotee only who has an inordinate love and devotion for Him The Blessed Lord attaches all importance to devotion, discrimination and detachment from worldliness

— Sri Ramakrishna

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ १५

यस्मात् न उद्-विजते लोक लोकात् न उद्-विजते च य ।
हर्ष-अ-मर्ष-भय-उद्-वेगै. मुक्त-न य स च मे प्रिय ॥

innocent baby is. A devotee with these excellences is endearing to the Lord.

God's presence cannot be felt in that heart which is given to attachment, aversion and fear.

— Sri Ramakrishna

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥ १८
तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी संतुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥ १९

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मान-अप-मानयोः ।
शीत-उष्ण-सुख-दुःखेषु समः सङ्ग-वि-वर्जितः ॥
तुल्य-निन्दा-स्तुतिः मौनी सम्-तुष्टः येन केन-चित् ।
अ-निकेतः स्थिर-मतिः भक्ति-मान् मे प्रियः नरः ॥

*samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca tathā mānāpamānayoḥ ।*
*śītoṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu samaḥ saṅgavivarjitaḥ ॥*
*tulya nindā stutir maunī saṁtuṣṭo yena kenacit ।*
*aniketaḥ sthiramatir bhaktimān me priyo naraḥ ॥*

समः *samaḥ* the same शत्रौ *śatrau* to foe च *ca* and मित्रे *mitre* to friend च *ca* and तथा *tathā* also मान अपमानयोः *māna apamānayoḥ* in honour and dishonour शीत उष्णसुख दुःखेषु *śīta uṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu* in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain समः *samaḥ* the same सङ्गविवर्जितः *saṅga vivarjitaḥ* free from attachment

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिः *tulya nindā stutiḥ* to whom censure and praise are equal मौनी *maunī* silent संतुष्टः *saṁtuṣṭaḥ* contented येनकेनचित् *yenakenacit* with anything अनिकेतः *aniketaḥ* homeless स्थिरमतिः *sthiramatiḥ* steady-minded भक्तिमान् *bhaktimān* full of devotion मे *me* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear नरः *naraḥ* (that) man

of this stanza gives the answer to this question One should not feel joyous when one comes at things pleasant, for, that mind which is a victim of joy is also a potential victim of misery A strong mind, on the other hand, remains unaffected by joy and sorrow A devotee is he who conquers anger and envy which are his twin enemies Every time he is overcome by either of these, the stamina of his mind declines The wind of anger or envy may toss the creeper of the mind of the ordinary man, but the mind of the devotee stands like a stalwart tree, unperturbed by it He is too strong to be affected by such petty feelings Fear is worse than death, which can only rob man of his body, whereas the former wrecks the entire personality The frightened man is a heap of empty sensation, nothing worthy emanates from him The devotee knows no fear and so divinity beams out of him Anxiety is another mental disease which eats into the stamina of man The devotee takes all happenings as divine dispensation and there is nothing to be disturbed about The devotee who is made up of such sterling qualities is claimed by the Lord as His own

That man wastes his own time and energy who always engages himself in recounting the worth of the others For, in doing so, he neither gains in building his own character nor in getting fixed in the glory of the Lord

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १६

अन्-अप-ईक्ष शुचि दक्षः उद्-आसीन गत-व्यथ ।
सर्व-आरम्भ परि-त्यागी यः मद्-भक्त स मे प्रिय ॥

A worldly man with a talent for music sings to receive the applause of the public. He derives pleasure in their praise and pain in their censure if any. But when a Bhakta sings the glory of the Lord, he is indifferent to the censure and the praise of the people. His activities are likely to be exposed to public remarks. But he remains dead to all their observations and goes his own divine way.

The devotee prefers to be silent. If at all he talks, it would be about the Lord and nothing else. His training the tongue in this way is equivalent to the practice of silence.

A person unexpectedly and hurriedly returning home on some important business, reconciles himself with any means of transport that is immediately available. He is not much worried if there be any lack of amenities and facilities in the travel. The Bhakta's position in the world is very much like this. Communion with God is his sole concern. He is therefore content with anything worldly that comes his way in his earthly sojourn.

To a hurrying traveller sitting accommodation in any of the railway coaches is sufficient. The Bhakta, the Godward pilgrim on earth does not claim any residence as his home. He holds on to the ideal:—

> "Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend?
> The sky thy roof; the grass thy bed;"

The devotee seeks nothing but God. He is therefore steady-minded. He gives himself completely to God. So he becomes the favourite of God.

He who is not deceived by his own mind—a person such as he alone, gains access to the divine presence of the Lord. The point comes to this an attitude free from guile and deceit and a devotion true to the core — these are the means to take one Godward.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

योे न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७

यः न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभ-अशुभ-परि त्यागी भक्ति-मान् यः स मे प्रियः ॥

*yo na hṛsyati na dvesti na śocati na kāṅkṣati* ।
*śubhāśubha parityāgī bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyaḥ* ॥

यः *yaḥ* who न *na* not हृष्यति *hṛsyati* rejoices न *na* not द्वेष्टि *dveṣṭi* hates न *na* not शोचति *śocati* grieves न *na* not काङ्क्षति *kāṅkṣati* desires शुभ अशुभपरित्यागी *śubha aśubha parityāgī* renouncing good and evil भक्तिमान् *bhaktimān* full of devotion यः *yaḥ* who सः *saḥ* he मे *me* to me प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear

**He who neither rejoices nor hates nor grieves nor desires, renouncing good and evil, full of devotion, he is dear to Me. 17**

The worldly people rejoice obtaining things pleasing to the senses; but the lover of God does not behave as they do. They hate them who create unwanted situations; but the devotee pays no heed to bad people and unpleasant situations. He does not grieve when he is deprived of worldly possessions nor does he desire to procure them for his personal enjoyment. His intense devotion to the Lord admits no other desire into his heart. He is free from the notions of good and evil, even as an

to grief or destruction. Being both an ardent devotee and a staunch practiser of dharma, he is the dearest to the Lord.

*Bhakti* is of two kinds—the *Vaidika bhakti* and the *Prema bhakti*. To conform to the injunctions in the Scripture, to chant the name of the Lord as many times as prescribed, to fast and pray, to go on pilgrimage, to perform ritualistic worship with the aid of the enjoined materials — all these belong to the former kind. An earnest pursuance of these means leads the devotee ultimately into the latter, the *Prema bhakti*, in which there is no place for any kind of earthly attachment. The *Bhakta* gives himself over entirely to the Lord. This whole-hearted offering is graciously accepted by the Lord and the devotee becomes His own.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The path of karma in the first six chapters and the path of *Bhakti* in the second six get united here. In the following six chapters the path of *Jnāna* remains to get united with these two.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे भक्तियोगो नाम
द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām*
*yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde bhaktiyogo*
*nāma dvādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the twelfth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION

**He who is the same to foe and friend and also in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment,** **18**

**To whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion — that man is dear to Me.** **19**

Day and night are inevitable on earth, but in the blazing sun they have no place Friendship and enmity are but natural among fellow beings, but in the fervour of the divine love of God these differences vanish of their own accord

An illicit love in the initial stage is mindful of shame and social decorum But when it deepens into open familiarity all sense of shame is set aside There is some similarity between this and the divine love of God, which pays no heed to honour and dishonour While the former leads the fallen one to depravity, the latter elevates the devotee into the Sublime The worldly people are flippant both in honouring and dishonouring a devotee of God But unconcerned that he is with these passing phases, the devotee goes headlong in his love of the Maker

To the one subject to body consciousness the feeling of cold and heat is natural with the change of climate But to the one given to divine ecstasy born of Bhakti, this feeling does not come.

The feeling of pleasure and pain is concomitant with the feeling of cold and heat When the attachment to the body is overcome, these feelings disappear as a matter of course.

Arjuna said:

**Prakriti and Purusha, also the Kshetra and Kshetrajna, knowledge and that which ought to be known, these, O Kesava, I desire to learn.**

This stanza is not found in all the editions of the Gita. Hence it is kept unnumbered.

श्री भगवानुवाच

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥ १

इदम् शरीरम् कौन्तेय क्षेत्रम् इति अभि-धीयते ।
एतत् यः वेद्-ति तम् प्र-आहुः क्षेत्र-ज्ञः इति तद्-विदः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya kṣetram ity abhidhīyate* ।
*etad yo vetti taṁ prāhuḥ kṣetrajña iti tadvidaḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

इदम् *idaṁ* this शरीरम् *śarīraṁ* body कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya क्षेत्रम् *kṣetraṁ* the field इति *iti* thus अभिधीयते *abhidhīyate* is called एतत् *etat* this यः *yaḥ* who वेत्ति *vetti* knows तम् *taṁ* him प्राहुः *prāhuḥ* (they) call क्षेत्रज्ञः *kṣetrajñaḥ* the knower of the field इति *iti* thus तद्विदः *tadvidaḥ* the knowers of that

The Blessed Lord said:

**This body, O Kaunteya, is called Kshetra, the field; he who knows it is called Kshetrajna by the sages.** 1

The literal meaning of *Kshetra* is that which is protected from perishing. The body of beings is called *Kshetra* because it is saved from destruction

Do not allow worldly thoughts and concerns disturb your mind. Discharge your duties as and when they present themselves to you. But fasten your mind ever at the feet of the Lord.

— Sri Ramakrishna

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
श्रद्दधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥ २०

ये तु धर्म्य-अमृतम् इदम् यथा उक्तम् परि-उप-आस्-अते ।
श्रद्-दधानाः मद्-परमाः भक्ताः ते अति-इव मे प्रियाः ॥

*ye tu dharmyāmṛtam idam yathoktam paryupāsate* ।
*śraddadhānā matparamā bhaktās te 'tīva me priyāḥ* ॥

ये *ye* who तु *tu* indeed धर्म्यामृतम् *dharmyāmṛtam* immortal dharma इदम् *idam* this यथा उक्तम् *yathā uktam* as declared पर्युपासते *paryupāsate* follow श्रद्दधानाः *śraddadhānāḥ* endued with Sraddha मत्परमाः *mat paramāḥ* regarding me as their supreme भक्ताः *bhaktāḥ* devotees ते *te* they अतीव *atīva* exceedingly मे *me* to me प्रियाः *priyāḥ* dear

**They, verily, who follow this immortal dharma described above endued with Sraddha, looking upon Me as the Supreme Goal, and devoted — they are exceedingly dear to Me. 20**

*Sraddha* is the common factor to all the forms of spiritual practices. It is therefore linked here with the path of *Bhakti*. On the ground of his holding the Lord as the Supreme Goal, the devotee does not abandon work. He holds fast to the practice of dharma. *Mukti* and Immortality being the outcome of the practice of dharma, it is here equated with Immortality. It is also called the Sanatana Dharma. He who conforms to dharma never comes

सर्वक्षेत्रेषु *sarva kṣetreṣu* in all fields भारत *bhārata* O Bharata क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोः *kṣetra kṣetrajñayoḥ* of the field and of the knower of the field ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge मतम् *mataṁ* is considered to be मम *mama* my

**And know Me as the Kshetrajna in all Kshetras, O Bharata. The knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetrajna is deemed by Me as true knowledge. 2**

Prakriti and Purusha are called respectively as *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*—the non-self and the self. The former is insentient and the latter sentient. The Purusha identifies himself with the Prakriti and fancies that its characteristics are all his own. It is like the colour of a flower which seems transposed to a crystal kept near it. That Purusha is called a *Jivatman* who identifies himself with the Prakriti that he handles. The differentiation in Prakriti is infinite; for this reason the *Jivatmans* are also infinite.

The Cosmic Intelligence is Iswara. While He appears to be imbued with the characteristics of the Prakriti, He is actually untouched by it. He is the Innermost Self in all beings. The individual souls and the universe have no existence independent of Iswara. He is therefore the *Kshetrajna* in all the *Kshetrās*. Though containing everything in Himself, He is eternally free, pure and blissful.

*Jnāna* or knowledge is the true understanding of both—the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna*. The knowledge pertaining to the *Kshetra* is classified as *Apara*

# क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगः

## KSHETRA KSHETRAJNA VIBHAGA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF THE DISCRIMINATION OF THE KSHETRA AND THE KSHETRAJNA

## CHAPTER XIII

Prakriti and Purusha Constitute Everything — The Vehicles of Revelation—The Constituents of Kshetra—Self-culture — Brahman Defined—The Effect of Evolving in Wisdom – One Appearing as the Many – Bhakti Evolves into Jnana – Prakriti and Purusha are Eternal Verities - The Seed of the Mundane Life—Brahma jnana Dispels the Delusion of Birth—The Four Yogas – Gaining in Unity is Mukti —Karma Pertains to Prakriti —Brahman is Self sufficient

**Prakriti and Purusha Constitute Everything — 1-3**

अर्जुन उवाच

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च ।
एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव ॥

प्रकृतिम् पुरुषम् च एव क्षेत्रम् क्षेत्रज्ञम् एव च ।
एतत् वेदितुम् इच्छामि ज्ञानम् ज्ञेयम् च केशव ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*prakṛtim puruṣam cai'va kṣetram kṣetrajñam eva ca* ।
*etad veditum icchāmi jñānam jñeyam ca keśava* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtim* the Prakriti पुरुषम् *puruṣam* the Purusha च *ca* and एव *eva* even क्षेत्रम् *kṣetram* the field क्षेत्रज्ञम् *kṣetrajñam* the knower of the field एव *eva* even च *ca* and एतत् *etat* this वेदितुम् *veditum* to know इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) wish ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge ज्ञेयम् *jñeyam* what ought to be known च *ca* and केशव *keśava* O Kesava

The scientific enquiry made by the modern man is a true search into the Prakriti. It has taken him very near the Purusha. As Kartikeya's survey terminated in his coming back to the Divine, the scientist will very soon come to know that the manifest universe has its origin and sustenance in the Cosmic Intelligence.

One is not termed as rich by one's merely owning money. There are signs of one's being rich. His house would be well lit in all the rooms. Whereas a poor man cannot afford to have many lights.

The human body is the tabernacle of the Lord. It should not be kept in the darkness of ignorance. It should be lit with the lamp of wisdom. When you illumine your heart with this lamp, you will behold the benign Lord there. *Jnana* can be gained by one and all. There are in the human temple two entities — the little *Jivatman* and the great Paramatman. The former is dependent on the latter. As the electricity from the same source illuminates all the houses, the Paramatman gives light to all the *Jivatmans*. The Divine Knowledge illumines your body, yourself and the Paramatman in you, all at once.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक्च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।**
**स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥ ३**

तत् क्षेत्रम् यत् च यादृक् च यद् विकारि यतः च यत् ।
सः च यः यद्-प्र-भावः च तत् सम्-आसेन मे शृ-णु ॥

*tat kṣetraṁ yac ca yādṛk ca yadvikāri yataś ca yat* ।
*sa ca yo yat prabhāvaś ca tat samāsena me śṛṇu* ॥

तत् *tat* that क्षेत्रम् *kṣetraṁ* field यत् *yat* which च *ca* and यादृक् *yādṛk* what like च *ca* and यद्विकारि *yadvikāri* what its modifications यतः *yataḥ* whence च *ca* and यत् *yat* what सः *saḥ* he च *ca* and यः *yaḥ* who यत् प्रभावः *yat prabhāvaḥ* what his powers च *ca* and तत् *tat* that समासेन *samāsena* in brief मे *me* from me शृणु *śṛṇu* hear

to which it is prone The word *Kshetra* also means the field It becomes increasingly productive to the extent it is improved But its fertility provides scope both for the corn and the weed to thrive in it Similarly in the field of his body, man reaps the fruits of his good and bad karma The body is therefore the *dharma kshetra* of the *Jivatman* There is an intelligent principle that not only resides in the body but also cognizes and governs it The sages designate that discerning principle as *Kshetrajna*

The human body may be compared to a pot The mind, intellect and the senses are parallel to the water, rice and potato put into that pot placed on a hearth Within a while the pot gets heated and the water boils the rice and potato The contents then become too hot to be handled This heat, however, belongs to the fire and not to the pot and its contents Similarly it is the *Sakti* of Brahman that enlivens the body, mind, intellect and the senses

— Sri Ramakrishna

Are the countless *Kshetrās* and *Kshetrajnās* in the universe linked in any way? The enlightenment comes —

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ २

क्षेत्र-ज्ञम् च अपि माम् विद्धि सर्व-क्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्र-क्षेत्र-ज्ञयोः ज्ञानम् यत् तत् ज्ञानम् मतम् मम ॥

*kṣetrajñam cā 'pi mām viddhi*
*sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata* ।
*kṣetra kṣetrajñayor jñānam*
*yat taj jñānam matam mama* ॥

क्षेत्रज्ञम् *kṣetrajñam* the knower of the field च *ca* and अपि *api* also माम् *mām* me विद्धि *viddhi* know

The sages have fully utilized the sciences and arts for the revelation of Truth, which remains unaffected by the passage of time. The value of Truth does not go down for its being clothed in imperfect language. But the Rishis have taken care to expound it in the most refined and appropriate language. The precision of expression has been augmented by them with music. Accurate language is by itself appealing to the intellect. When music is combined with it, the joint appeal to the head and the heart becomes doubly effective. Music is by itself very powerful and fascinating to all beings. Wild and venomous beings are easily tamed by it. Emotion is awakened and refined by music. Bliss and sweetness are engendered by it. The Rishis have sanctified both of these instruments, literature and music, by utilizing them for conveying divine message.

Literature and music become lop-sided when hanressed exclusively for the cultivation of emotion. The sages have avoided that defect by balancing it with rigid reasoning which is another powerful instrument to arrive at Truth. Reason that is consistently followed, leads to clarification and conviction.

Emotion devoid of reason lands one in mere sentimentalism, in which many an unwary, credulous and mediocre devotee lands himself. Clarity of understanding and firmness of action cannot be expected of such a namby-pamby one. Again, there is the other one given to dry and dreary intellectualism, devoid of any sweet touch of life. But a

*vidyā* or the lower knowledge and that pertaining to the *Kshetrajna* as *Parā vidyā* or the Knowledge Superior. To be well-versed and versatile in the Vedas, the *āgamās*, grammar, rhetoric, and the branches of science and arts — all these come under the lower knowledge. *Brahma jnāna* or the Self-knowledge is the supreme knowledge. Enquiry commences with a diligent study of Nature and culminates in *Brahma jnāna.* Secular knowledge bereft of the sacred is therefore incomplete. The former is the stepping stone to the latter. True knowledge consists of wisdom pertaining to the phenomenon and the Noumenon.

A puranic story illustrates this point. Ganesa and Kartikeya are the sons of the Lord Siva. It was once put to these valiant sons that whoever returned first after surveying the entire Existence, would get as prize a celestial fruit brought by the Sage Narada. No sooner was this announcement made than Kartikeya dashed abroad on his speedy peacock. The plumpy Ganesa pondered over the terms imposed, moved slowly but surely on his tiny vehicle of a mouse, circumambulated his Father and Mother, and claimed the prize. But within a while came the younger brother also, successfully terminating his expedition. Both the brothers were wise in their own way. Kartikeya inquired into the *manifest* Prakriti and Ganesa into the Unmanifest Purusha. A harmonious combination of these two inquiries constitutes true knowledge. Knowing the one to the exclusion of the other is imperfect knowledge.

एतत् *etat* this क्षेत्रम् *kṣetraṁ* field समासेन *samāsena* briefly सविकारम् *savikāraṁ* with modifications उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtaṁ* has been described

**The great elements, egoism, intellect, as also the unmanifested, the ten senses and the one mind, and the five objects of the senses;** **5**

**Desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, firmness — the Kshetra has been thus briefly described with its modifications.** **6**

*The great elements.* The ether, the air, the fire, the water and the earth — these are the elements constituting the infinite universe. In their gross form they are not equally distributed everywhere. But in their subtle state they permeate the whole universe. They are for this reason called the great elements.

*Egoism.* It is the cause of the five elements. The Self projects the non-Self and identifies Itself with it. This identification is egoism. When the Pure Consciousness thinks of Itself as the materialized consciousness, it is egoism. *Intellect* is the *tattva* or principle of determination. It is from this principle that egoism emanates. It is also known as the *Mahat*.

*The Unmanifested* is technically called *avyaktam* or *mūla prakriti*. That which is in the unmodified state is the meaning of this term. This principle is the cause of *buddhi* or the intellect. These are all the powers of Iswara.

" Verily this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the Gunas is hard to surmount," said the Lord in

**Hear briefly from Me, what the Kshetra is, what its properties are, what its modifications are, whence is what; and who He is and what His powers are. 3**

Naught exists and naught remains to be known outside the pale of the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*. The Vedas and the Vedanta philosophy are all directed to the enquiry into these two ultimate Realities. All the branches of knowledge that are so far revealed and that are yet to be revealed, that are conventionally divided into the sacred and the secular—all of them are engaged in explaining either the *Kshetra* or the *Kshetrajna* or both.

The how of it is delineated in the following stanza:—

**The Vehicles of Revelation — 4**

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥ ४

ऋषिभिः बहु-धा गीतम् छन्दोभिः वि-विधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्म(न्)-सूत्र-पदैः च एव हेतु-मद्भिः वि-निस्-चि-तैः ॥

*ṛsibhir bahudhā gītaṁ chandòbhir vividhaiḥ pṛthak* ।
*brahmasūtrapadaiś cai 'va hetumadbhir viniścitaiḥ* ॥

ऋषिभिः *ṛsibhiḥ* by Rishis बहुधा *bahudhā* in many ways गीतम् *gītaṁ* sung छन्दोभिः *chandobhiḥ* in chants विविधैः *vividhaiḥ* various पृथक् *pṛthak* distinctive ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैः *brahma sūtra padaiḥ* in the apt words indicative of Brahman च *ca* and एव *eva* even हेतुमद्भिः *hetumadbhiḥ* full of reasoning विनिश्चितैः *viniścitaiḥ* decisive

**This has been sung by Rishis in many ways, in various distinctive chants, in passages indicative of Brahman, full of reasoning and convincing. 4**

*Desire* is that form of mentation which seeks the repetition of the contact with the objects that seem agreeable to the senses.

*Hatred* is that mental state which seeks to avoid with revulsion those sense-objects which are disagreeable or painful.

*Pleasure* is an experience that pacifies the mind and promotes *sattva guna.*

*Pain* is a mentation that is disagreeable and disquieting.

*The Aggregate* is the assemblage of the various parts of the body. A machine is assembled by fixing all its parts in their proper places. The best and the most marvellous organic machine is the human body. Its functioning at all levels is equally marvellous.

*Chetana* is intelligence or the power to reveal and interpret. A piece of iron that comes into contact with fire reveals the fire in its own way. Similarly the capacity of the senses to imbibe and to reveal the characteristics of the Atma is the *chetana* or intelligence inherent in them. Since the body is being experienced and interpreted by this intelligence, it is classified as the *Kshetra.*

*Dhṛti* or firmness is the stamina to keep the body and the senses fit and active. Left to themselves they get exhausted and drift into indolence. But the resolve that emanates from within infuses fresh energy and activity into them. This particular urge is called firmness. It gives longevity to the body. Since *dhṛti* is also an object of experience it is classi-

balanced personality is that in which love and understanding are well knit together.

Sage Narada was endowed with a penetrating intellect and an all absorbing divine love Devotees ought to evolve after his pattern

—Sri Ramakrishna

**The Constituents of Kshetra—5 6**

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥ ५

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्घातश्चेतना धृतिः ।
एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥ ६

(महत्)महा-भूतानि अहम्-कार. बुद्धि अ-वि-अक्तम् एव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दश एकम् च पञ्च च इन्द्रिय-गोचरा ॥

इच्छा द्वेष सुखम् दु खम् सम्-घात चेतना धृ-ति ।
एतत् क्षेत्रम् समासेन स-वि-कारम् उद्-आ-हृतम् ॥

*mahābhūtāny ahamkāro buddhir avyaktam eva ca* ।
*indriyāni daśai 'kam ca pañca ce 'ndriyagocarāḥ* ॥

*icchā dvesaḥ sukham duḥkham*
*samghātaś cetanā dhrtiḥ* ।
*etat ksetram samāsena*
*savikāram udāhrtam* ॥

महाभूतानि *mahā bhūtāni* the great elements अहकार *ahamkāraḥ* egoism बुद्धि· *buddhiḥ* intellect अव्यक्तम् *avyaktam* the unmanifested एव *eva* even च *ca* and इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāni* the senses दश *daśa* ten एकम् *ekam* one च *ca* and पञ्च *pañca* five च *ca* and इन्द्रियगोचरा. *indriyagocarāḥ* objects of the senses

इच्छा *icchā* desire द्वेष. *dveṣaḥ* hatred सुखम् *sukham* pleasure दु.खम् *duḥkham* pain सघात *samghātaḥ* the aggregate चेतना *cetanā* intelligence धृति: *dhṛtiḥ* fortitude

**Humility, modesty, non-injury, forbearance, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control;** **7**

*Humility* is in evidence when the *sadhaka* does not think of himself superior to the others. Superiority-complex engenders conceit and contaminates the mind.

*Modesty* marks that aspirant, as its own, who does not think or speak of the merits in his activities. All excellences emanate from the Lord. Man's laying claim to them is born of ignorance.

*Non-injury* is possible to him only who beholds all beings as the manifestations of the one Cosmic Being.

*Forbearance* is the act of not being affected by the wrong done to one by the others. An example illustrates this position. It happens that while a man speaks, his teeth hurt the lip inadvertently. For this reason the man does not think of knocking out the teeth, which are his own. He who seeks divine relationship with all, practises forbearance with those who wrong him knowingly or unknowingly.

*Uprightness* comes to him who harmonizes his thought, word and deed and who is intent on right conduct.

*Service of the teacher* is quite essential to the spiritual aspirant. An individual unconsciously imbibes the traits of the person whom he serves. By doing physical service to the teacher, the disciple gets into his holy dispositions.

chapter seven, stanza fourteen. He also called them "My prakriti divided eightfold," in the fourth stanza of that chapter.

*The Ten Senses* are the eye, the ear, the skin, the tongue and the nose forming a group known as the senses of knowledge — the *Jnāna indriyās*. The external world is cognized and interpreted with the aid of these organs. The other group consists of five organs of action —*karma indriyās*. They are the hand, the foot, the mouth, the anus and the genital organ.

*Mind* is the principle that thinks and doubts. It is therefore held as the aggregate of *sankalpa* and *vikalpa*. It functions as the background of all the ten senses. The demon Ravana with his ten heads is the personification of the mind functioning through the ten senses.

*The Sense-objects* are five in number. They are the taste, form or colour, touch, sound and smell, on which the senses feed and thrive.

The Samkhya school of philosophy is based on these twentyfour categories or principles technically known as *tattvās*.

The Vaiseshika school of philosophy claims that desire, hatred, pleasure and pain mentioned here, to be the characteristics of Atman. But these are actually the modifications of the mind; they are the objects of experience; they are impermanent; they only reveal the nature of the *Kshetra*. As such they are classified with the *Kshetra*.

**Dispassion towards the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism; perception of evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain; 8**

Nature bears evidence to the truth that beings evolve surely, though slowly, from the low order of existence to the high. Evolution of the body is complete at the human level. But there are stages of mental evolution to be striven after. Man has to perfect his mind in ethical and spiritual discipline. He should not therefore stagnate at the physical plane. His ideal in life is to emerge from the earthly existence into the divine. This is best effected by detachment from the mundane and attachment to the supra-mundane. Craving for the objects of the senses gives place to holy hankering after the divine. It is egoism when man identifies himself with the body. Instead, he strives to feel himself as Atman. Bodily existence is necessarily associated with birth, death, old age, sickness and pain. This evil is transcended by him who rises above body-consciousness. It is in this wise that spiritual life commences for the aspirant.

Man grows in devotion to the Lord in direct proportion to his detachment from the objects of the senses.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥ ९

अ-सक्तिः अन्-अभिष्वङ्गः पुत्र-दार-गृह-आदिषु ।
नित्यम् च सम-चित्तत्वम् इष्ट-अन्-इष्ट-उप-पत्तिषु ॥

*asaktir anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ putra dāra gṛhādiṣu* ।
*nityaṁ ca samacittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu* ॥

fied as the *Kshetra.* The items from 'desire' to the 'firmness' mentioned here, are the qualities or the modifications of the mind stuff.

The body is classified as the *Kshetra* in the first stanza. And it is exhaustively dealt with in these two stanzas.

Why do the devotees look after this body so carefully when it is actually a combination of things perishable? Nobody pays heed to an empty package But people preserve carefully a paper box containing precious gems and jewels. In that manner the devotees take care of the body due to its being the temple of the Lord. They cannot afford to neglect it. All human bodies are the treasure chests containing Iswara.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The knowledge of the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is not acquired by mere book learning, which only supplies empty information. Intuitive knowledge is the outcome of the way of living It is delineated:—

Self-culture — 7-11

अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ ७

अ-मानित्वम् अ-दम्भित्वम् अ-हिंसा क्षान्तिः आर्जवम् ।
आचार्य-उप-आसनम् शौचम् स्थैर्यम् आत्म(न)-वि-नि-ग्रहः ॥

*amānitvam adambhitvam ahimsā kṣāntir ārjavam ।*
*ācāryopāsanam śaucam sthairyam ātmavinigrahaḥ ॥*

अमानित्वम् *amānitvam* humility अदम्भित्वम् *adambhitvam* unpretentiousness अहिंसा *ahimsā* non-injury क्षान्तिः *kṣāntiḥ* forgiveness आर्जवम् *ārjavam* uprightness आचार्य उपासनम् *ācārya upāsanam* service of the teacher शौचम् *śaucam* purity स्थैर्यम् *sthairyam* steadiness आत्मविनिग्रहः *ātma vinigrahaḥ* self-control

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥ १०

मयि च अन्-अन्य-योगेन भक्तिः अ-वि-अभि-चारिणी ।
विविक्त-देश-सेवि(न्)-त्वम् अ-र(म्)-तिः जन-सम्-सदि ॥

*mayi cā 'nanyayogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī |*
*vivikta deśa sevitvam aratir janasaṁsadi ||*

मयि *mayi* to me च *ca* and अनन्ययोगेन *ananya yogena* by the yoga of non-separation भक्तिः *bhaktiḥ* devotion अव्यभिचारिणी *avyabhicāriṇī* unswerving विविक्तदेशसेवित्वम् *vivikta deśa sevitvaṁ* resort to solitary places अरतिः *aratiḥ* distaste जनसंसदि *janasaṁsadi* for the society of men

**Unswerving devotion to Me in yoga of non-separation, resort to sequestered places, distaste for the society of men; 10**

Mind in its entirety must be dedicated to the Lord, with the strong conviction that there is nothing else worthy of interest. The way of the devotee is never to divide and distract his mind between the Real and the Unreal. His constant absorption is and ought to be in the Lord.

A place endowed with natural beauty, pleasing and elevating to the mind, quite healthy and free from disturbance by wild animals is to be selected by the *sadhaka* for his residence. Company of the holy ones at the initial stage and severance from them too, at the advanced stage is a spiritual necessity to the *sadhaka* progressing in the path to perfection.

*Purity* pertains both to the body and the mind. Bodily purity can be effected with the aid of the environment, air, water and sunlight. But purity of the mind which is more important and indispensable to spiritual life can only be effected by the mental discipline. That mind which eschews all sense-pleasures as poison gains steadily in purity.

*Steadfastness* is his who is not mindful of the time taken for self-culture. It may be that the *sadhaka* has to plod through a few births before he attains perfection in any one among the many virtues that remain to be acquired by him. Unswerving perseverance is needed to mould oneself in spirituality.

*Self-control* is the opposite of self-indulgence which dissipates the personality. Through rigid self-restraint, the *sadhaka* grows in godhood which is his original state.

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥ ८

इन्द्रिय-अर्थेषु वैराग्यम् अन्-अहम्-कारः एव च ।
जन्म(न्)-मृत्यु-जरा-वि-आधि दुःख-दोष-अनु-दर्शनम् ॥

*indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam anahamkāra eva ca* ।
*janma mṛtyu jarā vyādhi duḥkha doṣānudarśanam* ॥

इन्द्रिय अर्थेषु *indriya artheṣu* of sense-objects वैराग्यम् *vairāgyam* dispassion अनहंकारः *anahamkāraḥ* absence of egoism एव *eva* even च *ca* and जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोष अनुदर्शनम् *janma mṛtyu jarā vyādhi duḥkha doṣa anudarśanam* perception of evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain

Brahman. These dispositions are all called *Jnāna* because of their great and unfailing contribution to it.

Dispositions counter to them are vanity, self-esteem, injury, revengefulness, crookedness, indifference towards the teacher, dirty habits, fickleness, self-indulgence, longing for the objects of the senses, egoism, perception of pleasure in bodily life, earthy attachment, identification of self with son, wife, home and the like, restlessness due to occurrence of the desirable and the undesirable, lack of devotion to the Maker, longing for a social life and dislike for sacred studies. People inclined in these ways contaminate their minds; they do not grow in wisdom and Self-knowledge.

How is it that we are not able to contact Iswara who is all pervading? Standing by the side of a pond covered with moss and reeds, one feels inclined to think that there is no water in it. But the moss has to be pushed aside to see the water below. Similarly *Maya* with her concealing power has to be brushed aside from our mind before we are blessed with a vision of the all pervading Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does any good come from *Brahma jnāna?* The answer comes :—

**Brahman Defined — 12**

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।
अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥ १२

ज्ञेयम् यत् तत् प्र-वच्-स्यामि यत् ज्ञा-त्वा अ-मृतम् अश्-नु-ते ।
अन्-आदि-मत् परम् ब्रह्म न सत् तत् न असत् उच्यते ॥

*jñeyaṁ yat tat pravakṣyāmi yaj jñātvā 'mṛtam aśnute* ।
*anādimat paraṁ brahma na sat tan nā 'sad ucyate* ॥

असक्ति *asaktih* non attachment अनभिष्वङ्ग *anabhisvangah* non identification of self पुत्रदारगृहादिषु *putra dāra grhādisu* with son, wife, home and rest नित्यम् *nityam* constant च *ca* and समचित्तत्वम् *sama cittatvam* even-mindedness इष्ट अनिष्ट उपपत्तिषु *ista anista upapattisu* on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable

**Unattachment, non-identification of self with son, wife, home, and the like, and constant equanimity in the occurrence of the desirable and the undesirable ; 9**

There are objects of senses to which man gets deeply attached if not to the enjoyment thereof Such attachments require to be eliminated by discrimination. Inordinate identification with son, wife and home drives one to the position of holding them as one's own self.* Ailment if any of a kith causes misery to one, due to imaginary ownership The death of the wife or the son deals a greater blow than the death of oneself can possibly render. The loss of the earthly possessions of a miser brings complete frustration to him. Such are the effects of the baneful identification with people and property that are not actually one's own for ever The right attitude therefore is to view all beings and all possessions as belonging to the Lord Worldly events are prone to cause likes and dislikes in a worldly man But the spiritual aspirant ought to practise even-mindedness in all eventualities

* A person found it very difficult to meditate on God because of his inordinate attachment to a relative "Behold your favourite relative as God come in that form," was the advice given to him On pursuing that attitude meditation on the Lord became easy to that person — Sri Ramakrishna

Immortality then becomes his own. He is no more affected by the relative '*sat*' and '*asat*' — being and non-being, the manifest state and the unmanifest state.

*Akhanda Brahman* can be experienced in *Samadhi* only. What follows is all silence. Enquiry into the nature of the Purusha and Prakriti, knowledge and ignorance — all these cogitations come to an end.

Beatitude alone persists. There, the position of the *Jivatman* is the same as that of a salt doll, incapable of surviving a sea-bath.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the plenitude that the *sadhaka* enjoys before his merging in Brahman — the Ocean of Immortality? The elucidation comes :—

**The Effect of Evolving in Wisdom — 13-15**

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ १३

सर्वतः पाणि-पादम् तत् सर्वतः अक्षि-शिरः मुखम् ।
सर्वतः श्रुति-मद् लोके सर्वम् आ-वृत्-य तिष्ठ-ति ॥

*sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ tat sarvato 'kṣiśiromukham* ।
*sarvataḥ śrutimal loke sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati* ॥

सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* everywhere पाणिपादम् *pāṇi pādaṁ* with hands and feet तत् *tat* that सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* everywhere अक्षिशिरः मुखम् *akṣi śiraḥ mukhaṁ* with eyes, head and mouth सर्वतः *sarvataḥ* everywhere श्रुतिमत् *śrutimat* with ears लोके *loke* in the world सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all आवृत्य *āvṛtya* having enveloped तिष्ठति *tiṣṭhati* exists

**With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes and hands and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere— He exists enveloping all. 13**

The moth abandons darkness and rushes to the light of the lamp The ant would rather give up its life than sever contact with juice *Even so the devotee is ever intent on the Lord and* he has no other concern in life

—Sri Ramakrishna

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥ ११

अधि आत्म-ज्ञान-नित्य त्वम् तत्त्व-ज्ञान-अर्थ-दर्शनम् ।
एतत् ज्ञानम् इति प्र-उक्तम् अ-ज्ञानम् यत् अत अन्यथा ॥

*adhyātma jñāna nityatvam tattva jñānārtha darśanam* ।
*etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānaṁ yad ato 'nyathā* ॥

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वम् *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam* constancy in self-knowledge तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनम् *tattva jñāna artha darśanam* perception of the end of true knowledge एतत् *etat* this ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge इति *iti* thus प्रोक्तम् *proktam* declared अज्ञानम् *ajñānam* ignorance यत् *yat* which अत: *ataḥ* to it अन्यथा *anyathā* opposed

**Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of the knowledge of Truth; this is declared to be knowledge, and what is opposed to it is ignorance. 11**

Sentimental devotion to the Maker is not sufficient. Divine love ought to be seasoned by diligent inquiry into the nature of the Self and the non-Self. Brahman is Truth. All endeavours ought to be directed to the realization of this verity. Pursuit of *Brahma vidyā* as provided in the Upanishads is the infallible means to this great end.

All the dispositions elaborated from the seventh stanza up to this, contribute jointly to the development of wisdom, the divine eye and the intuitive faculty leading to the realization of

and colours. While apparently assuming forms and hues, sunlight is not in itself with form and colour. It is unattached to all these modifications. *Chaitanya* or Consciousness which is the characteristic of Atman, plays a role similar to that of the sunlight. Consciousness lights up the senses and aids them function in their respective wont. Brahman or the Absolute Awareness is also known as the *Chidākāsa*. It is the substratum to everything sentient and insentient as the screen is the substratum to the cinema pictures projected on it. The pictures do not get their colours from the screen, nor is the screen affected by those colours. Still the screen helps the pictures appear in their true colours. Similarly the three Gunas are not in Brahman. All the same Brahman aids the Gunas shine in their colours and characteristics. The awareness of the Gunas is possible because of the background of Brahman, who is all Awareness.

Both the aspects, that with form and that without form, belong to the same God. Faith in the one implies faith in the other. The fire and its heating property cannot be separated one from the other. The sun and the sunbeams are inseparable. Milk and its whiteness are inseparable. Similarly Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman are one and the same. It is not possible to conceive of the one to the exclusion of the other.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥ १५

बहिः अन्तः च भूतानाम् अ-चरम् चरम् एव च ।
सूक्ष्म-त्वात् तत् अ-वि-ज्ञा-यम् दूर-स्थम् च अन्तिके च तत् ॥

ज्ञेयम् *jñeyaṁ* has to be known यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that प्रवक्ष्यामि *pravakṣyāmi* (I) will declare यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* knowing अमृतम् *amṛtaṁ* immortality अश्नुते *aśnute* (one) attains to अनादिमत् *anādimat* the beginningless परम् *paraṁ* supreme ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman न *na* not सत् *sat* being तत् *tat* that न *na* not असत् *asat* non-being उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**I shall describe that which has to be known, knowing which one attains to immortality. Beginningless is the Supreme Brahman. It is not said to be 'sat' or 'asat.' 12**

In chapter nine stanza nineteen the Lord defined Himself as immortality and death. He also spoke of Himself as '*sat*' and '*asat*'—being and non-being. Saguna Brahman is immanent in Prakriti. In that state all contradictions and conflicts meet in Him. In the relative existence the immortality of the Devas and the death of the human beings emanated from Saguna Brahman. His manifest aspects with variation in the three Gunas is '*sat*' and His unmanifest aspect in which the three Gunas disappear in equilibrium, is '*asat.*'

But in the Nirguna Brahman there is no modification of any kind. The manifest state and the unmanifest state do not apply to Him. He is Pure Consciousness. having neither a beginning nor an end. While the Devas have a relative immortality, Nirguna Brahman is the Absolute Immortality. This Supreme State is to be realized in intuition or *Nirvikalpa samādhi*. That *Jivatman* who intuits this *Brahma nirvāna* gets merged in Brahman. Absolute

alternative to your holding Iswara as with form. The Nirguna Brahman cannot be comprehended by the embodied one. Again the Saguna Brahman is not a fiction of the mind. The body, mind and the world may be viewed as mere projections. But Iswara or the Saguna Brahman is as real as the Nirguna Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

One Appearing as the Many — 16-17

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १६

अ-वि-भज्-तम् च भू-तेषु वि-भज्-तम् इव च स्था-तम् ।
भू-त-भर्तृ च तत् ज्ञा-यम् ग्रसिष्णु प्र-भविष्णु च ॥

*avibhaktaṁ ca bhūteṣu vibhaktam iva ca sthitam* ।
*bhūta bhartṛ ca taj jñeyaṁ grasiṣṇu prabhaviṣṇu ca* ॥

अविभक्तम् *avibhaktaṁ* undivided च *ca* and भूतेषु *bhūteṣu* in beings विभक्तम् *vibhaktaṁ* divided इव *iva* as if च *ca* and स्थितम् *sthitaṁ* existing भूतभर्तृ *bhūta bhartṛ* the supporter of beings च *ca* and तत् *tat* that ज्ञेयम् *jñeyaṁ* to be known ग्रसिष्णु *grasiṣṇu* devouring प्रभविष्णु *prabhaviṣṇu* generating च *ca* and

**He is undivided and yet He seems to be divided in beings. He is to be known as the supporter of beings. He devours and He generates. 16**

The *ākāsa* is all pervading. Yet it appears as if divided into the innumerable forms. The fact is that it expands undivided while seeming as if divided. Even such is the case with the Paramatman. As *ākāsa* is the support to the remaining four elements, Paramatman the universal Consciousness is the support to the *Jagat* and the *Jivatman*. In *Pralaya* they merge into the Paramatman. In crea-

A river assumes the characteristics of the sea as it flows to its proximity Before the *Jivatman* merges into the Nirguna Brahman he gets a panoramic view and realization of Iswara While the multitudinous beings seem to have their own individualities, they are actually part and parcel of the Cosmic Entity. There is nothing outside the pale of Iswara Not an atom can move independent of Iswara One Supreme Purusha puts on the role of the innumerable

As long as there is a trace of egoism in me I see Iswara as *the Owner of the universe and all the beings in it*

—Sri Ramakrishna

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।
असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥ १४

सर्व-इन्द्रिय-गुण-आ भासम् सर्व-इन्द्रिय-वि-वर्जितम् ।
अ सक्तम् सर्व भृत् च एव निर्-गुणम् गुण-भोक्तृ च ॥

*sarvendriya gunābhāsam sarvendriya vivarjitam* ।
*asaktam sarvabhrc cai 'va nirgunam gunabhoktr ca* ॥

सर्व इन्द्रिय गुण आभासम् *sarva indriya guna ābhāsam* shining by the functions of all senses सर्व इन्द्रियविवर्जितम् *sarva indriya vivarjitam* without the senses असक्तम् *asaktam* unattached सर्वभृत् *sarvabhrt* supporting all च *ca* and एव *eva* even निर्गुणम् *nirgunam* devoid of Gunas गुणभोक्तृ *gunabhoktr* experiencer of the Gunas च *ca* and

**Shining by the functions of all the senses, yet without the senses; Absolute, yet sustaining all; devoid of Gunas, yet, He experiences them. 14**

The sunlight enables us to see colourful forms in their true perspective It may be said that the sunlight reveals itself as the interpreter of all forms

but it also loses that borrowed faculty; whereas the Atman never loses It's Light. The physical light and darkness, characteristic of the inert matter, do not have any effect on or access to Atman. In pitch darkness, one is not able to see one's own body and clothing. But that darkness is no hindrance to the self cognizing its own presence. This self-cognizance is not improved upon by the presence of sunlight. Self-awareness is self-evident. The sunlight and the darkness are perceived by the physical eye because of the light it has acquired from the Atman enshrined in the heart. The senses perceive, the mind feels and the intellect cogitates because of the light they get from the Atman.

He who realizes Iswara in his heart is able to realize Him outside too. He who has not known Him within himself, cannot cognize Him elsewhere. Therefore, he who sees God in his heart sees Him everywhere. — Sri Ramakrishna

**Bhakti Evolves into Jnana — 18**

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।
मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥ १८

इति क्षेत्रम् तथा ज्ञानम् ज्ञा-यम् च उक्तम् सम्-आस-तः ।
मद्-भज्-तः एतत् वि-ज्ञाय मद्-भावाय उप-पद्-य-ते ॥

*iti kṣetraṁ tathā jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ co 'ktaṁ samāsataḥ |*
*madbhakta etad vijñāya madbhāvāyo 'papadyate ||*

इति *iti* thus क्षेत्रम् *kṣetraṁ* the field तथा *tathā* as well as ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge ज्ञेयम् *jñeyaṁ* the knowable च *ca* and उक्तम् *uktaṁ* have been stated समासतः *samāsataḥ* briefly मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ* my devotee एतत् *etat* this विज्ञाय *vijñāya* knowing मद्भावाय *madbhāvāya* to my being उपपद्यते *upapadyate* enters .

*bahir antaś ca bhūtānām acaram caram eva ca |*
*sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam dūrastham cā 'ntike ca tat ||*

बहि *bahiḥ* without अन्त *antaḥ* within च *ca* and भूतानाम् *bhūtānām* of beings अचरम् *acaram* the unmoving चरम् *caram* the moving एव *eva* also च *ca* and सूक्ष्मत्वात् *sūksmatvāt* because of its subtlety तत् *tat* that अविज्ञेयम् *avijñeyam* unknowable दूरस्थम् *dūrastham* is far च *ca* and अन्तिके *antike* near च *ca* and तत् *tat* that

**Without and within all beings; the unmoving and also the moving, because of His subtlety He is incomprehensible; He is far and near. 15**

How the Cosmic Consciousness remains undivided has to be comprehended through a few similes In a block of ice immersed in the sea, water is present within and without Again *akāsa* remains undivided in and through all things with form or formless Similarly Paramatman is all pervading and undivided by the manifest forms There is movement on the surface of the sea while it is all stillness at the bottom There is movement in Paramatman modified as the Prakriti As Nirguna Brahman, He is all stillness The sea water transformed into vapour becomes subtle and invisible Nirguna Brahman who is all Awareness and all Intelligence remains incomprehensible to those who have not purified the mind To the ignorant one, God is far away somewhere in heaven But to the knowing one, none is nearer than God, He being the innermost Self

The symptoms of egoism are found in the one come down from *Samadhi* to wakefulness Such an enlightened one sees himself, all the beings and the universe as the various manifestations of Iswara When there is egoism in you, there is no

Prakriti and Purusha are not essentially two different entities. The same Reality enjoys two phases of self-assertion and self-expression. As *suddha chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness, It is ever Itself and there is no modification in It. This Changeless Reality puts on the appearance of changefulness and modifications. The former phase is Purusha and the latter phase, Prakriti.

Prakriti puts on the embodiment of time, space and causation. It is constituted of the three Gunas–*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Because of its changeful nature, it is called *Māyā*. This substance being an eternal verity, it is termed as having no beginning, and therefore, no end too.

As the ocean is sometimes calm and placid and at other times boisterous and furious, Brahman is both actionless and active. When free from action, He is termed Brahman and when active, *Maya*.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।**
**पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ २०**

कार्य-कारण-कर्तृ-त्वे हेतुः प्र-कृ-तिः उच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुख-दुःखानाम् भोक्तृत्वे हेतुः उच्यते ॥

*kārya kāraṇa kartṛtve hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate* ।
*puruṣaḥ sukhaduḥkhānāṁ bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate* ॥

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे *kārya kāraṇa kartṛtve* in the production of the body and the senses हेतुः *hetuḥ* the cause प्रकृतिः *prakṛtiḥ* Prakriti उच्यते *ucyate* is said (to be) पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* Purusha सुखदुःखानाम् *sukha duḥkhānāṁ* of pleasure and pain भोक्तृत्वे *bhoktṛtve* in the experience हेतुः *hetuḥ* the cause उच्यते *ucyate* is said (to be)

tion they reappear in the Paramatman. They are not exterior to the Paramatman in creation, preservation and destruction. As the waves come up, stay and disappear in the sea, these manifest things and beings are either patent or latent in the Lord.

A holy man once saw clouds appearing suddenly in the clear sky and disappearing again, blown by the wind. This sight threw him into raptures He exclaimed "Brahman is Contentless Consciousness like the clear sky. As clouds appear in the latter, the universe of beings appears in the former and then disappears too! Brahman remains ever Itself."

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥ १७

ज्योतिष्-आम् अपि तत् ज्योतिः तमसः परम् उच्-य-ते ।
ज्ञा-नम् ज्ञा-यम् ज्ञान-गम्यम् हृदि सर्वस्य वि-स्था-तम् ॥

*jyotiṣām api taj jyotis tamasaḥ param ucyate* ।
*jñānam jñeyam jñānagamyam hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam* ॥

ज्योतिषाम् *jyotiṣām* of lights अपि *api* even तत् *tat* that ज्योतिः *jyotiḥ* light तमसः *tamasaḥ* from darkness परम् *param* beyond उच्यते *ucyate* is said (to be) ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge ज्ञेयम् *jñeyam* that which is to be known ज्ञानगम्यम् *jñānagamyam* the goal of knowledge हृदि *hṛdi* in the heart सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all विष्ठितम् *viṣṭhitam* seated

**The Light of all lights, He is said to be beyond darkness; knowledge, the knowable, the goal of knowledge, seated in the hearts of all. 17**

Though the sun and the stars are self-luminous, they lose their luminosity while in *Pralaya*. *Buddhi* acquires its power of understanding from the Atman;

The Seed of the Mundane Life — 21

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥ २१

पुरुषः प्रकृति-स्थः हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृति-जान् गुणान् ।
कारणम् गुण-सङ्गः अस्य सद्-असद्-योनि-जन्मसु ॥

*puruṣaḥ prakṛtistho hi bhuṅkte prakṛtijān guṇān* ।
*kāraṇaṁ guṇasaṅgo 'sya sad asad yoni janmasu* ॥

पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* Purusha प्रकृतिस्थः *prakṛtisthaḥ* seated in Prakriti हि *hi indeed* भुङ्क्ते *bhuṅkte* enjoys प्रकृतिजान् *prakṛtijān* born of Prakriti गुणान् *guṇān* Gunas कारणम् *kāraṇaṁ* the cause गुणसङ्गः *guṇasaṅgaḥ* attachment to the Gunas अस्य *asya* of his सत् असत् योनि जन्मसु *sat asat yoni janmasu* of birth in good and evil wombs

**Purusha seated in Prakriti, experiences the Gunas born of Prakriti; attachment to the Gunas is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs. 21**

He who is exposed to the sun gets heat and he who is exposed to rain gets wet. Similarly the *Jivatman* gets identified with Prakriti and imagines that its qualities are all his own. The varying sensations such as happiness and misery and the modifications of the mind such as delusion and discrimination— these are all the outcome of clinging to the one or the other of the Gunas. It is this attachment again that prolongs the cycle of birth. By adhering to the superior Guna, the *Jivatman* is born as a celestial or fully evolved human being. By holding on to the inferior Guna, he is born as an animal or bird. Getting stuck in mingled Gunas, he is born as a mediocre man.

**Thus the Kshetra, knowledge and that which has to be known have been briefly described. My devotee, on knowing this, is fitted for My state. 18**

On whatever object a man directs his entire attention, he is able to understand that object in its true state He who is absorbed in devotion to Iswara is able to know Him It is *jnāna* when man understands that God alone is revealing Himself as everything This wisdom places him for ever in the presence of Iswara Soaked as he is in the thought and feeling of God he dwells with God

He alone is a Jnani who has realized Iswara He becomes like a babe after God realization The baby has no individuality of its own Therefore divinity beams through it

—Sri Ramakrishna

**Prakriti and Purusha are Eternal Verities — 19-20**

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ॥ १९

प्र-कृतिम् पुरुषम् च एव विद्-धि अन्-आदी उभौ अपि ।
वि-कारान् च गुणान् च एव विद्-धि प्र-कृ-ति-सम्-भवान् ॥

*prakṛtim puruṣam cai 'va viddhy anādī ubhāv api* |
*vikārāṁś ca guṇāṁś cai 'va viddhi prakṛtisambhavān* ||

प्रकृतिम् *prakṛtim* Prakriti पुरुषम् *purusam* Purusha च *ca* and एव *eva* even विद्धि *viddhi* know अनादी *anādi* beginningless उभौ *ubhau* both अपि *api* also विकारान् *vikārān* modifications च *ca* and गुणान् *gunān* Gunas च *ca* and एव *eva* even विद्धि *viddhi* know प्रकृतिसम्भवान् *prakrti sambhavān* born of Prakriti

**Know that Prakriti and Purusha are both without beginning; and know also that all modifications and Gunas are born of Prakriti. 19**

referee is able to see better into the orderliness and fouls in a game. The Lord resides in the human heart as witness to all that takes place in the body and the mind.

*Anumantā*—the One who permits. To one who has no ear for music a fine melody in classical music is no more than meaningless sound. His approval or permission for the musical performance to go on, counts for nothing. Whereas when an expert critic who enjoys that melody, pleads for its continuance, there is pleasure and purpose in that act. More seriously and effectively than this, the Lord witnesses the activities of the *Jivatman*, knows them in their true perspective and permits those of the activities which are conducive to the progress of the *Jivatman.* He is therefore the One that permits.

*Bhartā*—the Supporter. More important than witnessing a play and approving of it, is to materially aid and support it. In that way the Lord is the Supporter of the *Jagat* and the *Jivatman.*

*Bhoktā*—the One who experiences. A husband is not only the supporter of his wife, but he is also a partner, enjoyer and the one that experiences the family life. In this wise the Omniscient Lord is the One that experiences the insentient Prakriti.

*Maheswara*—the Great Lord. Gaining the devoted love of a chaste wife is more important in a family life than gathering variety of experiences in it. An ideal wife is never self-willed but subordinates her will to that of her husband. Prakriti is eternally spoused to Iswara; and she functions ever subser-

**In the production of the body and the senses, Prakriti is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, Purusha is said to be the cause. 20**

It is the father who transforms himself into the son Subsequently some of the doings of the son delight the father while some other activities pain him It is the Purusha that poses to become the Prakriti Modifications of the Prakriti are known as the body and the senses The senses in their turn get themselves classified as the senses of perception and those of action Both the forms of the senses are serviceable to the *Jivatman* to have contact and communication with Prakriti The relationship created in this way begets pleasure and pain The experience of pleasure and pain is the foremost factor in moulding the character of the *Jivatman* and in educating him for the life supramundane Prakriti is the foster-mother leading the *Jivatman* from the unreal to the real, from ignorance to enlightenment and from death to immortality.

Plenitudes and blessings such as *Brahma jnana* and the Bliss of Brahman come to us mortals because of the gracious mediation of *Maha maya* But for Her intervention none can have even a peep into the Beyond, what to speak of getting fixed into the Absolute ! Experience of the transitory world also comes to man because of Her grace The enjoyer and the enjoyment do not exist outside Her domain

— Sri Ramakrishna

In what manner is the *Jivatman* educated by Prakriti, is the question that crops up next. The answer ensues .—

**He who thus knows the Purusha and Prakriti together with the Gunas, is never born again, in whatever way he may live. 23**

A perfect mirror exactly reflects the things placed before it. But on that account the mirror undergoes no modification whatsoever. Like that, Brahman is in no way affected by the presence of Prakriti in His proximity. That *Jivatman* who cognizes the Supreme Brahman in his heart, becomes Brahman; for, that is his real state. Thenceforth he is not affected by the *Prārabdha karma* that keeps the body going. This karma may produce good and bad effects on the body; but the *Brahma jnāni* is not affected by them. Like the reflections in a mirror, Prakriti is cognized in his pure heart. His eulogizing it or his ignoring it is all the same to him. His body floats on as long as the past momentum maintains it. Apparently he resides in it as a *Jīvan mukta*. A burnt rope may retain its form, but it is no more useful for tying. The *āgāmi karma* and the *Sanchita karma* are all burnt out in the fire of wisdom. There is, therefore, no motive power to produce a new body. The Enlightened one merges in Brahman, never again to be reborn.

When the unburnt pots get damaged, the potter makes new pots out of them. But when a pot burnt in a kiln breaks, the broken pieces are rejected as useless. Similarly the man in ignorance is to be born and reborn. But that man whose karma is burnt out by the fire of knowledge is not reborn. He enters the Absolute.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What are the means to gain *Brahma jnāna?* The answer comes :—

Is there then, no way to get out of this wheel of birth and death? The assurance comes :—

**Brahma-jnana Dispels the Delusion of Birth — 22-23**

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ २२

उप-द्रष्टा अनु-मन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महा-ईश्वरः ।
परम-आत्मा इति च अपि उक्त· देहे अस्मिन् पुरुष. परः ॥

*upadrastā 'numantā ca bhartā bhoktā maheśvarah* ।
*paramātme 'ti cā 'py ukto dehe 'smin purusah parah* ॥

उपद्रष्टा *upadrastā* the spectator अनुमन्ता *anumantā* the permitter च *ca* and भर्ता *bhartā* the supporter भोक्ता *bhoktā* the enjoyer महेश्वर: *maheśvarah* the Great Lord परमात्मा *paramātmā* the Supreme Self इति *iti* thus च *ca* and अपि *api* also उक्त: *uktah* is called देहे *dehe* in the body अस्मिन् *asmin* (in) this पुरुष: *purusah* Purusha पर: *parah* Supreme

**The Supreme Purusha in this body is also called the Spectator, the One who permits, the Supporter, the One who experiences, the Great Lord and the Supreme Self. 22**

Manifold are the activities taking place in the human body. The *Jivatman* enshrouded in ignorance imagines himself the author thereof. But the fact is that this *Jivatman* is merely a reflection of the Great Lord enshrined in the body. And His glories are as follows :

*Upadrashtā* — the Spectator. The person who witnesses the game or the person who acts as the

worship ते *te* they अपि *api* also च *ca* and अतितरन्ति *ati taranti* cross beyond एव *eva* even मृत्युम् *mṛtyuṁ* death श्रुतिपरायणाः *śruti parāyaṇāḥ* regarding what they have heard as the supreme refuge

**Still others, not knowing thus, worship as they have heard from others; they too go beyond death by their devotion to what they have heard.** **25**

Among the four Yogas, Bhakti Yoga is the easiest. Scriptural knowledge and keen discrimination are not necessarily auxiliaries to this all absorbing path. The Gopis of Brindavan were uneducated and devoid of intellectual equipment. Still, through pure devotion they made the Lord of the universe their own. But if learning and wisdom can be properly utilized and if pure devotion is also side by side developed, progress in spirituality becomes easier still.

Devotion to the Lord may be compared to a ferocious tiger. As the latter destroys the cattle, the former destroys lust, greed and such like enemies to man. If *Bhakti* comes up but once, there is no more fear of being disturbed by lust and anger which will be all exterminated from the mind. The Gopis of Brindavan were free from these taints because of their extraordinary love of the boy Krishna.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The Karma Yoga, the Raja Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga and the Jnana Yoga—all these four yogas are given equal status and importance in the Bhagavad Gita. Any one of these four great paths is sufficient to lead the *sadhaka* to perfection. Still. the salutory course is to harmonize all the four paths. The Karma Yoga provides man with efficiency. The Raja Yoga adds to the stamina of the mind. The

vient to her Lord Because of His complete mastery over Prakriti, He is adored as the Great Lord

In the midst of His comprehensive relationship with Prakriti, He is eternally established in His Entirety and is in no way affected by the modifications of the Prakriti He is therefore *Paramātmā*—the Supreme Self, residing in the human tabernacle

The universe has come into being as a result of the union of the Purusha and the Prakriti And do you know how it functions? The master of the family is seated somewhere absorbed in some serious thought The housewife busies herself running here and there and attending to all the details of the affairs of the household Now and then she acquaints her husband with what is taking place here and there and seeks his counsel too, when necessary The man approves of what has taken place already and suggests what ought to take place next It is in this way that the Purusha and the Prakriti function

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

Does any good accrue from the knowledge of Purusha and Prakriti? The answer comes —

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ २३

य एवम् वेद् ति पुरुषम् प्र कृ तिम् च गुणै सह ।
सर्वथा वर्त-मान अपि न स भूय अभि (जन् )जा यते ॥

*ya evam vetti purusam prakrtim ca gunaih saha* ।
*sarvathā vartamāno 'pi na sa bhūyo 'bhijāyate* ॥

य *yah* who एवम् *evam* thus वेत्ति *vetti* knows पुरुषम् *purusam* Purusha प्रकृतिम् *prakrtim* Prakriti च *ca* and गुणै *gunaih* Gunas सह *saha* with सर्वथा *sarvathā* in all ways वर्तमान *vartamānah* living अपि *api* also न *na* not स *sah* he भूय *bhūyah* again अभिजायते *abhijāyate* is born

possible because of the combined contribution of the kinetic light and shadow and the static screen. A blazing fire is seen on the screen, which in fact remains unaffected. Parallel to this are the contributions made by the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* in producing the phenomenal universe and the beings in it. The insentient *Kshetra* appears sentient due to its being super-imposed on *Kshetrajna*. The immovable *Kshetrajna* in his turn appears to be born, to grow and to die, due to his identification with *Kshetra*. The man in ignorance misreads the characteristics of the *Kshetra* in the *Kshetrajna* and vice versa. It is knowledge to understand these two entities as they are in themselves, and not as they seem to be because of their mutual intermingling.

The stuff called milk gets itself divided into two stuffs called butter and butter-milk. Similar to this is Brahman the Reality in Its absolute and relative states. When you lose your individuality in *samadhi*, you are one with the Nirguna Brahman the Absolute Reality. But when you assume your *Jiva vyakti* or egoistic individuality, you cognize Iswara and His Prakriti with its twentyfour categories.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How does the *Jnāni* behold the Paramatman? The answer comes :—

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ २७

समम् सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तम् परम-ईश्वरम ।
वि-नश्-यत्सु अ-वि-नश्-यन्तम् यः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥

*samaṁ sarveṣu bhūteṣu tiṣṭhantaṁ parameśvaram* ।
*vinaśyatsv avinaśyantaṁ yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati* ॥

The Four Yogas—24-25

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥ २४

ध्यानेन आत्मनि पश्यन्ति के-चित् आत्मानम् आत्मना ।
अन्ये साङ्ख्येन योगेन कर्म(न्) योगेन च अपरे ॥

*dhyānenā 'tmani paśyanti kecid ātmānam ātmanā* ।
*anye sāmkhyena yogena karmayogena cā 'pare* ॥

ध्यानेन *dhyānena* by meditation आत्मनि *ātmani* in the self पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* behold केचित् *kecit* some आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the Self आत्मना *ātmanā* by the self अन्ये *anye* others सांख्येनयोगेन *sāmkhyena yogena* by the yoga of knowledge कर्मयोगेन *karma yogena* by karma yoga च *ca* and अपरे *apare* others

**By meditation some behold the Self in the self by the self, others by the yoga of knowledge and yet others by karma yoga. 24**

Of the four universally accepted yogas, the Raja Yoga, the Jnana Yoga and the Karma Yoga are mentioned in this stanza. Here the self refers to the *Jivatman* and the Self to Paramatman.

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥ २५

अन्ये तु एवम् अ(ज्ञा)-जा-नन्तः श्रु-त्वा अन्येभ्य· उप-आसते ।
ते अपि च अति-तरन्ति एव मृत्युम् श्रुति-पर-अयना. ॥

*anye tv evam ajānantaḥ śrutvā 'nyebhya upāsate* ।
*te 'pi cā 'titaranty eva mṛtyum śrutiparāyaṇāḥ* ॥

अन्ये *anye* others तु *tu* indeed एवम् *evam* thus अजानन्त *ajānantaḥ* not knowing श्रुत्वा *śrutvā* having heard अन्येभ्य *anyebhyaḥ* from others उपासते *upāsate*

समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ २८

समम् पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र सम्-अव-स्थितम् ईश्वरम् ।
न हिनस्ति आत्मना आत्मानम् ततः या-ति पराम् गतिम् ॥

*samaṁ paśyan hi sarvatra samavasthitam īśvaram* ।
*na hinasty ātmanā 'tmānaṁ tato yāti parāṁ gatim* ॥

समम् *samaṁ* equally पश्यन् *paśyan* seeing हि *hi* indeed सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere समवस्थितम् *samavasthitaṁ* equally dwelling ईश्वरम् *īśvaraṁ* the Lord न *na* not हिनस्ति *hinasti* destroys आत्मना *ātmanā* by the self आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the self ततः *tataḥ* then याति *yāti* goes पराम् *parāṁ* the highest गतिम् *gatiṁ* the goal

**Because he who sees the Lord, seated the same everywhere, destroys not the self by the self, therefore he reaches the Supreme Goal. 28**

Ignorance is the cause of all the evils committed by man. And the worst of all evils is the belief that man is the body and not the Atman. For, the continuity of the births is kept up by this belief. As long as he wallows in this delusion, he cannot help meeting with death repeatedly. The indestructible Atman is held by him as being destroyed by death. Due to ignorance man further believes that beings are separate, one from another. That they are all mere modifications of the one Cosmic Entity remains denied by him. Injury is done to the others because of the belief that they are separate. Whereas the knower of Brahman cognizes nothing alien to Brahman. His beholding Brahman in and through all

Bhakti Yoga unifies beings in sweet relationship. The Jnana Yoga sharpens the intellect and makes it luminous. All these great qualities and divine elements require to be perfectly blended to evolve an all absorbing divinity out of humanity.

The enlightenment that ensues from a balanced spiritual life is enumerated now:—

Gaining in Unity is Mukti — 26-28

यावत्सञ्जायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥ २६

यावत् सम्-जा-यते किम्-चित् सद्-त्वम् स्थावर-जङ्गमम् ।
क्षेत्र-क्षेत्र-ज्ञ-सम्-योगात् तद् विद्-(हि)धि भरत-ऋषभ ॥

*yāvat samjāyate kiṁcit sattvam sthāvara jangamam* ।
*kṣetrakṣetrajña samyogāt tad viddhi bharatarsabha* ॥

यावत् *yāvat* whatever संजायते *saṁjāyate* is born किंचित् *kiṁcit* any सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* being स्थावरजङ्गमम् *sthāvara jaṅgamam* the unmoving and the moving क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात् *kṣetra ksetrajña saṁyogāt* from the union between the Kshetra and Kshetrajna तत् *tat* that विद्धि *viddhi* know भरतर्षभ *bharatarsabha* O best of the Bharatas

**Whatever being is born, the unmoving or the moving, O best of the Bharatas, know it to be from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna. 26**

An analogy from the cinematograph facilitates the understanding of the relationship between *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*. The moving light and shadow projected on the stationary screen, produce the required effect. The picture of an active man is

the Atman is actionless, while the body which is seemingly his, is full of activities. He who intuits this is the enlightened one.

I adore Him as Brahman, who is all Awareness unaffected by activities such as creation, preservation and destruction. I adore Her as *Sakti*, or *Maya* or Prakriti who carries on all these activities regularly in the proximity of the actionless Brahman.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The relationship between the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is further clarified in the next stanza :—

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥ ३०

यदा भूत-पृथक्-भावम् एक-स्थम् अनु-पश्यति ।
ततः एव च वि-स्तारम् ब्रह्म सम्-पद्-यते तदा ॥

*yadā bhūtapṛthagbhāvam ekasthaṁ anupaśyati* ।
*tata eva ca vistāraṁ brahma saṁpadyate tadā* ॥

यदा *yadā* when भूतपृथग्भावम् *bhūta pṛthag bhāvaṁ* the whole variety of beings एकस्थम् *ekasthaṁ* resting in the one अनुपश्यति *anupaśyati* sees ततः *tataḥ* from that एव *eva* alone च *ca* and विस्तारम् *vistāraṁ* the spreading ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman संपद्यते *saṁpadyate* (he) becomes तदा *tadā* then

**When he realizes the whole variety of beings as resting in the One, and is an evolution from that One alone, then he becomes Brahman. 30**

The wave, the billow, the ripple, the tide, the breakers, the froth—all these modifications belong to the sea. The potentiality of the sea expresses itself in all these forms, which have no existence independent of the sea. In this manner, the inscrutable

समम् *samam* equally सर्वेषु *sarvesu* (in) all भूतेषु *bhūtesu* in beings तिष्ठन्तम् *tisthantam* existing परमेश्वरम् *parameśvaram* the Supreme Lord विनश्यत्सु *vinaśyatsu* among the perishing अविनश्यन्तम् *avinaśyantam* the unperishing यः *yaḥ* who पश्यति *paśyati* sees सः *saḥ* he पश्यति *paśyati* sees

**He sees, who sees the Supreme Lord, remaining the same in all beings, the undying in the dying. 27**

Parameswara is the *Chit-ākāsa* or *Chidambaram* or the Screen of Consciousness. It is the persisting Substratum. On this screen the perishing pictures of the *Jagat* and *Jivatman*—the universe and the beings—appear and disappear. As the cinema screen remains ever itself while the projected pictures on it come and go, the Paramatman is ever Himself unaffected and unmodified by the appearance and disappearance of the phenomenon. The *Jnāni* takes note of the background, Parameswara who provides apparent life and consciousness to the Prakriti clinging on to Him. In his vision the universe is not independent of the Paramatman. Whereas to the ignorant man the phantom of the universe seems real while the Paramatman remains unknown.

The sun is spreading his light equally everywhere and he is visible in all parts of the extensive world. Still, a small patch of cloud hides him from our sight. Similarly, *Maya* hides the all pervading Brahman from our cognition. When the veil of *Maya* is removed the *Sat-chit-ananda Brahman* is cognized everywhere and in all beings and things.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does any change take place in the life of the *sadhaka* who realizes Iswara? The answer comes:—

therefore having no beginning. All productions of *Māyā* are the components of the three Gunas which are subject to transformation. For this reason, the things made up of the Gunas are perishable. Brahman being Nirguna or beyond the Gunas, is imperishable. In His equanimity vibration is impossible. In other words no karma takes place in Him. He being the One without a second, there is nothing to taint Him.

That destruction to which the *Brahma jnāni's* body is exposed, does not affect him. The karma taking place in his body is not his. While the surface of the sea is all activity, its depth is all poise and peace. While the body of the *Jnāni* is active, he is supremely above action.

What are the characteristics of Brahman? He is untarnished by the Gunas. There is no action or movement in Him. The question of going and coming does not arise in His case. He is stationary like the Mount Meru.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Brahman's actionlessness and taintlessness are further defined :—

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥ ३२

यथा सर्व-गतम् सौक्ष्म्यात् आकाशम् न उप-लिप्यते ।
सर्व-त्र अव-स्थितः देहे तथा आत्मा न उप-लिप्यते ॥

*yathā sarvagatam saukṣmyād ākāśam no 'palipyate ।*
*sarvatrā 'vasthito dehe tathā 'tmā no 'palipyate ॥*

यथा *yathā* as सर्वगतम् *sarvagatam* the all-pervading सौक्ष्म्यात् *saukṣmyāt* because of its subtlety आकाशम्

the manifestations is the Supreme Goal that he attains while yet in body

When the nest is dismantled the bird flies away in the sky Similarly when the body consciousness is negated and attachment to the world annihilated, the *Jivatman* flies away into the sky of the Paramatman, only to be merged into Him

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does karma drop out from a *Brahma jnāni ?* The answer comes .—

**Karma Pertains to Prakriti — 29-30**

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥ २९

प्रकृत्या एव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथा आत्मानम् अ-कर्तारम् स पश्यति ॥

*prakṛtyai 'va ca karmāṇi kriyamāṇāni sarvaśaḥ* ।
*yaḥ paśyati tathā 'tmānam akartāram sa paśyati* ॥

प्रकृत्या *prakṛtyā* by Prakriti एव *eva* alone च *ca* and कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions क्रियमाणानि *kriyamāṇāni* being performed सर्वशः *sarvaśaḥ* all यः *yaḥ* who पश्यति *paśyati* sees तथा *tathā* so also आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self अकर्तारम् *akartāram* actionless सः *saḥ* he पश्यति *paśyati* sees

**He verily sees, who sees that all actions are done by Prakriti alone and that the Atman is actionless. 29**

Heat and light are inherent in the sun. Even so Prakriti is inherent in Brahman. But on this account Brahman undergoes no modification or pollution Prakriti or *Sakti* is full of activities The body of the *Jnāni* belongs to Prakriti Activities therefore may go on to any extent in it. The supreme state of the *Jnāni* is in no way affected by it. He,

यथा *yathā* as प्रकाशयति *prakāśayati* illumines एकः *ekaḥ* one कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnaṁ* the whole लोकम् *lokaṁ* world इमम् *imaṁ* this रविः *raviḥ* sun क्षेत्रम् *kṣetraṁ* the field क्षेत्री *kṣetrī* the Lord of the field तथा *tathā* so कृत्स्नम् *kṛtsnaṁ* the whole प्रकाशयति *prakāśayati* illumines भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**As the one sun illumines this whole world, so does the Lord of the Kshetra illumine the whole Kshetra, O Bharata.** 33

The sun that illumines the world is one without a second. Even so, the Paramatman who gives spiritual luminosity to the entire universe is one without a second. All beings great and small, high and low, get their consciousness from the same Source. While the sunlight falls equally on all things, the merits and demerits of those things do not affect the sun in any manner. In the same way the presence of the Paramatman in the hearts of the multitudinous beings ever shines in its original glory. The purity of the heart of the saint does not increase the profundity of the glory of the Paramatman. Neither does the impurity in the heart of the wicked diminish or tarnish the luminosity of the Lord. He remains ever in His glory while providing life, light and love to all beings.

Brahman is like a luminous lamp. One may utilize the light of the lamp for reading holy books while another may make use of it for preparing false documents. It is from Brahman that all get their power of understanding. The various uses to which the intellects of the beings are put do not affect Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The conclusion is :—

*Māyā Sakti* inherent in Brahman manifests itself as the multitudinous beings resting on Brahman Neither the beings nor the *Sakti* who is their root, is extraneous to Brahman The knower of this truth becomes a *Brahma Jnāni*

The static Brahman and the kinetic *Sakti* are in fact one and the same The Absolute *Sat chit ananda Brahman* is also the omnipotent, omniscient and all blissful Cosmic Mother As fire and heat are one and the same, Brahman and *Sakti* are the same

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

Do the activities of Prakriti affect Brahman? The elucidation comes :—

**Brahman is Self-sufficient — 31-34**

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥ ३१

अन्-आदि-त्वात् निर्-गुण-त्वात् परम-आत्मा अयम् अ-व्ययः ।
शरीर स्थ अपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥

*anāditvān nirgunatvāt paramātmā 'yam avyayaḥ* ।
*śarīrastho 'pi kaunteya na karoti na lipyate* ॥

अनादित्वात् *anāditvāt* being without beginning निर्गुणत्वात् *nirgunatvāt* being devoid of Gunas परमात्मा *param ātmā* the Supreme Self अयम् *ayam* this अव्यय. *avyayaḥ* imperishable शरीरस्थ *śarirasthaḥ* dwelling in this body अपि *api* though कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya न *na* not करोति *karoti* acts न *na* not लिप्यते *lipyate* is tainted

**Having no beginning and possessing no Gunas, this Supreme Self, imperishable, though dwelling in the body, O Kaunteya, neither acts nor is tainted. 31**

A thing that is created has a beginning. But Brahman is the one Reality that is not created. He is

Whereas the intuitive knowledge makes him consonant with the Reality. The dream and the delusion of the earth-bound life is transcended. That Brahman is the Eternal Verity is realized in *samādhi*. The Prakriti appears and disappears on the substratum of the Purusha. The goal of the *Jivatman* is not to get entangled in Prakriti, but to make use of it with an attitude of detachment and gain reunion with the Paramatman.

It is easy to say that the world is *Maya*—a delusion. But do you know the implication of this statement? It is like burning the camphor which leaves no residue. It is not like burning the fuel which leaves the ash behind. True spiritual pursuit leads the *sadhaka* into *Samadhi* in which the *Jagat* and the *Jiva* are eliminated. All relative existences vanish leaving behind Brahman, the Absolute.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगो नाम
त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde kṣetra kṣetrajña vibhāga yogo nāma trayodaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the thirteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE DISCRIMINATION
OF THE KSHETRA AND THE KSHETRAJNA

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*ākāśam* ether न *na* not उपलिप्यते *upalipyate* is tainted सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere अवस्थित *avasthitaḥ* seated देहे *dehe* in the body तथा *tathā* so आत्मा *ātmā* the Self न *na* not उपलिप्यते *upalipyate* is tainted

**As the all-pervading Akasa is not tainted, by reason of its subtlety, so the Self seated in the body everywhere, is not tainted.** **32**

Solidity, liquidity, gaseity — water is in all these three states Among them its vapour state defies being dirtied because of its subtlety *ākāsa* is the subtlest among the five elements It therefore remains untainted by the others Finally there is nothing subtler than the Atman He being the subtlest of all, there is nothing to taint Him

*ākāsa* is all-pervading Bodies such as the planets are not able to cut and cleave it in parts Parallel to it the *Chit ākāsa* or Brahman is all pervading The physical forms of beings do not and cannot cleave Him He is neither attached to the bodies nor is tainted by them

*Jnana* and *ajnana*, good and evil dharma and adharma — dualities such as these do not gain access to Brahman who is beyond them and unaffected by them

— Sri Ramakrishna

Further .—

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ ३३

यथा प्र-काशयति एक कृत्स्नम् लोकम् इमम् रवि ।
क्षेत्रम् क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नम् प्र-काश्-अयति भारत ॥

*yathā prakāśayaty ekaḥ kṛtsnam lokam imam raviḥ* ।
*kṣetram kṣetrī tathā kṛtsnam prakāśayati bhārata* ॥

The sages who have been blessed with Self-knowledge have nothing else to gain. And this supreme knowledge has already been explained. Still, it is again delineated from another angle. While *Brahma jnāna* is the easiest to acquire for those who have purified their minds, it is the hardest and the least understood for those whose minds are steeped in worldliness. It therefore requires to be presented in as many ways as possible. The votaries of *Brahma jnāna* are designated as Munis. Perfection is theirs to the extent they make progress in this knowledge. While the advanced *Brahma jnānis* are ever perfect in themselves, their bodily existence often puts on apparent defects. The limits of the *Kshetra* ought not however to be imputed to the *Kshetrajna* or the self. But since this error is committed frequently, Self-knowledge requires to be expounded repeatedly and in a variety of ways.

Knowledge pertaining to Iswara is the real knowledge. Branches of arts and sciences, logic, grammar—learning such as these usually confuse the understanding instead of clarifying it. Sacred books often function as shackles that prevent free thinking. All learning is good if it can ever guide man Godward.

—**Sri Ramakrishna**

The benefits of *Brahma jnāna* are :—

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ २

इदम् ज्ञानम् उप-आ-श्रित्य मम साधर्म्यम् आ-ग(म्)-ताः ।
सर्गे अपि न उप-(जन्)जा-यन्ते प्र-लये न व्यथ्-अन्ति च ॥

*idaṁ jñānam upāśritya mama sādharmyam āgatāḥ* ।
*sarge 'pi no 'pajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca* ॥

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥ ३४

क्षेत्र क्षेत्र ज्ञयो एवम् अन्तरम् ज्ञान चक्षुषा ।
भूत प्र-कृति-मोक्षम् च ये विदुः यान्ति ते परम् ॥

*ksetra ksetrajñayor evam antaram jñāna caksusā* ।
*bhūtaprakrti moksam ca ye vidur yānti te param* ॥

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयो *ksetra ksetrajñayoḥ* between the Kshetra and the Kshetrajna एवम् *evam* thus अन्तरम् *antaram* distinction ज्ञानचक्षुषा *jñāna caksusā* by the eye of knowledge भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षम् *bhūta prakrti moksam* the liberation from the Prakriti of being च *ca* and ये *ye* who विदु *viduḥ* know यान्ति *yānti* go ते *te* they परम् *param* the Supreme

**They who perceive with the eye of wisdom this distinction between the Kshetra and Kshetrajna and the deliverance of beings from the Prakriti, they go to the Supreme. 34**

The doctor has to understand first the nature of the disease and the peculiarities of the patient before he could effect a radical cure If either the ailment or the ailing person be not properly known, the treatment becomes ineffective to that extent More earnest and more accurate ought to be the study of the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* by the spiritual aspirant. The distinction between these two has to be clearly understood Above all, the development of the intuitive faculty by means of a co-ordinated and devotionally tuned spiritual life is most imperative For, the divine eye alone opens up the vista to Truth Mere book learning leads the aspirant nowhere

*mama yonir mahad brahma*
*tasmin garbhaṁ dadhāmy aham* ।
*saṁbhavaḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ*
*tato bhavati bhārata* ॥

मम *mama* my योनिः *yoniḥ* womb महत् ब्रह्म *mahat brahma* the great Brahma तस्मिन् *tasmin* in that गर्भम् *garbhaṁ* germ दधामि *dadhāmi* place अहम् *ahaṁ* I संभवः *saṁbhavaḥ* the birth सर्वभूतानाम् *sarva bhūtānāṁ* of all beings ततः *tataḥ* thence भवति *bhavati* is भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**My womb is the Mahat Brahma (Prakriti); in that I place the germ; thence, O Bharata, is the birth of all beings.** **3**

The Prakriti is called *Mahat Brahma*, the four-faced entity. He is constituted of the three Gunas. He is the material cause of everything movable and immovable. Whatever is manifest as the universe with its multitudinous beings is he; and his unmanifest state is immensely more. For this reason he is known as the *Mahat Brahma* — the great entity. All-pervasiveness is his.

A seed is sown in the soil. In this act, the seed is the germ and the soil, the womb. In a baby's coming into being, its mother and father function as the Prakriti and the Purusha respectively. This act takes place in a macrocosmic scale too. In the great womb of the Prakriti the germ of *ātma chaitanya* is embedded. The blissful union of the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna* takes place in this way, leading to the coming forth of *Hiranyagarbha*, the cosmic embodied being. And the countless *Jīvātmās* are

# गुणत्रयविभागयोगः

## GUNATRAYA VIBHAGA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE GUNAS

## CHAPTER XIV

Jnana aids Mukti—The Process of Birth—The Functions of the Gunas—The Symptoms of the Gunas—Transcending the Gunas is Mukti—The Definition of the one who has Transcended the Gunas

### Jnana aids Mukti—1-2

श्री भगवानुवाच

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥ १

परम् भूय प्र-(व्रू)वक्ष्-स्यामि ज्ञानानाम् ज्ञानम् उत्तमम् ।
यत् ज्ञा-त्वा मुनय. सर्वे पराम् सिध्-तिम् इत. ग (म्)-ताः ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*param bhūyaḥ pravakṣyāmi jñānānām jñānam uttamam|*
*yaj jñātvā munayaḥ sarve parām siddhim ito gatāḥ ||*

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

परम् *param* supreme भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again प्रवक्ष्यामि *pravakṣyāmi* (I) will declare ज्ञानानाम् *jñānānām* of all knowledges ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge उत्तमम् *uttamam* the best यत् *yat* which ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known मुनयः *munayaḥ* the sages सर्वे *sarve* all पराम् *parām* supreme सिद्धिम् *siddhim* to perfection इतः *itaḥ* after this life गताः *gatāḥ* gone

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**I shall again declare that supreme knowledge, the best of all forms of knowledge; by knowing which, all the sages have passed from this world to the highest perfection. 1**

birth and thrive. The Prakriti is the Cosmic Mother for the entire creation. And Iswara is the Father.

How does the Prakriti bind the *Jīvās?* The process is explained :—

### The Functions of the Gunas — 5-10

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ ५

सद्-त्वम् रजः तमः इति गुणाः प्र-कृति-सम्-भवाः ।
नि-ब(न्)ध्-नन्ति महा-बाहो देहे देहिनम् अ-व्ययम् ॥

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti guṇāḥ prakṛtisaṁbhavāḥ* ।
*nibadhnanti mahābāho dehe dehinam avyayam* ॥

सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas इति *iti* these गुणाः *guṇāḥ* Gunas प्रकृतिसंभवाः *prakṛti saṁbhavāḥ* born of Prakriti निबध्नन्ति *nibadhnanti* bind महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed देहे *dehe* in the body देहिनम् *dehinaṁ* the embodied अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* the indestructible

**Sattva, Rajas, Tamas — these Gunas, O mighty-armed, born of Prakriti, bind the indestructible embodied one fast in the body. 5**

The Prakriti is made up of the three Gunas. It should not be construed that just as forms are superimposed on substances like gold, the Gunas are superimposed on the Prakriti. Verily just as fire and its heat are one and the same; Prakriti and the Gunas are identical. In tricolour printing, all the various hues and shades required for a colourful picture can be very effectively brought out. Even so the entire Prakriti consists of the three Gunas.

इदम् *idam* this ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge उपाश्रित्य *upāśritya* having taken refuge in मम *mama* my साधर्म्यम् *sādharmyam* unity आगताः *āgatāḥ* having attained to सर्गे *sarge* at the time of creation अपि *api* also न *na* not उपजायन्ते *upajāyante* are born प्रलये *pralaye* at the time of dissolution न *na* not व्यथन्ति *vyathanti* are (they) disturbed च *ca* and

**They who, having devoted themselves to this knowledge, have attained to unity with Me, are neither born at the time of creation, nor are they disturbed at the time of dissolution.** **2**

The doll of salt consigned to the sea loses its assumed individuality and regains its natural state Even such is the case with the *Jnāni* He gets himself identified with Brahman, who is beyond the modifications of Prakriti Transmigrations involving him in births and deaths do not trouble and tarnish him

Boiled paddy does not sprout when sowed in the field But the unboiled grain keeps on propagating The man bathed in the fire of *Brahma jnana* is no more troubled with births and deaths But the ignorant one cannot escape from that ordeal

—Sri Ramakrishna

How is the cycle of birth kept up? The answer comes —

The Process of Birth—3-4

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन्गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ ३

मम योनिः महत् ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भम् दधामि अहम् ।
सम्-भव सर्व-भूतानाम् ततः भवति भारत ॥

The *Sattva Guna* may be compared to an evenly made clear glass. Light passes through it unobstructed and undiminished. Things seen through that glass are as vividly visible as to a normal naked eye. The *Sattva* is similarly transparent to the brilliance of Atman. Seeing the things objectively in their true perspective is the secular knowledge. Seeing the Atman as He is, is the sacred knowledge.

The enjoyment of a pleasure is with a greater gusto in the highly developed ones than in the ordinary beings. This is due to the predominance of *Sattva* in the former beings. A hearty enjoyment of a pleasure in its turn breeds an inordinate attachment to it. The one who enjoys pleasure greatly next tries to increase his knowledge of the object of enjoyment. Pleasure derived from an object and the knowledge of that object are interrelated. Therefore there grows as much attachment to the knowledge as there is attachment to the pleasure.○ The scope for the cultivation of pleasure and the knowledge pertaining to it is ever on the increase in *Sattva*. The subtler a force the more powerful is it in effect. Attachment to emotional pleasure and the intellectual pleasure is almost akin to *ānandam* which is Brahman. To outgrow and transcend this transient pleasure is hardly ever possible to a *sadhaka*.

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ ७

रजः राग-आत्मकम् विद्-(हि) धि तृष्णा-सङ्ग-सम्-उद्-भवम् ।
तत् नि-ब(न्धु)धु-ना-ति कौन्तेय कर्म(न्)-सङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥

none other than the rays radiating from this cosmic being. The *Jivatman* is also called the *Kshetrajna* because of his being endowed with the faculty of understanding. Variations and grades in the *Jīvātmās* are all due to the limiting adjuncts *(Upādhis)* caused by desires which are all born of ignorance. Consequently the *Jivatmans* are all of infinite aptitudes and temperaments.

The next stanza further clarifies this fact.

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ ४

सर्व-योनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः सम्-भवन्ति याः ।
तासाम् ब्रह्म महत् योनिः अहम् बीज-प्रदः पिता ॥

*sarva yoniṣu kaunteya mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ* ।
*tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir aham bījapradaḥ pitā* ॥

सर्वयोनिषु *sarva yoniṣu* in all the wombs कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya मूर्तयः *mūrtayaḥ* forms संभवन्ति *sambhavanti* are produced याः *yāḥ* which तासाम् *tāsām* their ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahma महत् *mahat* great योनिः *yoniḥ* womb अहम् *ahaṁ* I बीजप्रदः *bījapradaḥ* seed-giving पिता *pitā* father

**Whatever forms are produced, O Kaunteya, in any wombs whatsoever, the great Brahma (Prakriti) is their womb, I the seed-giving Father. 4**

The wombs of the Prakriti are infinitely graded providing scope for all types of beings to sprout forth. The celestials, the human beings, the beasts, the birds, the insects, the vegetable kingdom, the bacteria—all these have their suitable wombs to take

तमः *tamaḥ* inertia तु *tu* but अज्ञानजम् *ajñānajaṁ* born of ignorance विद्धि *viddhi* know मोहनम् *mohanaṁ* deluding सर्वदेहिनाम् *sarva dehināṁ* to all embodied beings प्रमाद आलस्य निद्राभिः *pramāda ālasya nidrābhiḥ* by heedlessness, indolence and sleep तत् *tat* that निबध्नाति *nibadhnāti* binds fast भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**But know Tamas to be born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings; it binds fast, O Bharata, by heedlessness, indolence and sleep.** 8

*Tamas* is inertia born of ignorance. It enshrouds the discrimination of man. While *Rajas* despoils *Sattva*, *Tamas* despoils both *Rajas* and *Sattva*. It delivers man into heedlessness, indolence and sleep, rendering him inert. By nature it is destructive.

All the three Gunas are collectively described again :—

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ॥ ९

सद्-त्वम् सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।
ज्ञानम् आ-वृत्-य तु तमः प्र-मादे संजयति उत ॥

*sattvaṁ sukhe sañjayati rajaḥ karmaṇi bhārata ।*
*jñānam āvṛtya tu tamaḥ pramāde sañjayaty uta ॥*

सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva सुखे *sukhe* to happiness सञ्जयति *sañjayati* attaches रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas कर्मणि *karmaṇi* to action भारत *bhārata* O Bharata ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge आवृत्य *āvṛtya* shrouding तु *tu* verily तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas प्रमादे *pramāde* to heedlessness सञ्जयति *sañjayati* attaches उत *uta* but

In substance they are one while in expression they are three.

Prakriti or the *Kshetra* is dependent on the *Kshetrajna*. How can the Gunas bind him who is the owner thereof? The fact is that the unfettered Atman seems as if fettered due to ignorance. Wavelets in the water cause the reflection of the sun in it to quiver. It is the reflection of the sun that trembles, but not the real sun. In this manner the reflected Atman seems to be in the shackles of the Gunas, while actually neither the reflected Atman nor the original Atman in any way gets bound.

The characteristics of the three Gunas are now delineated :—

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥ ६

तत्र सद्-त्वम् निर्-मल-त्वात् प्र-काशकम् अन्-आमयम् ।
सुख-सङ्गेन (बन्ध्) बध्-ना-ति ज्ञान-सङ्गेन च अन्-अघ ॥

*tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt prakāśakam anāmayam* |
*sukha saṅgena badhnāti jñānasaṅgena cā 'nagha* ||

तत्र *tatra* of these सत्त्वम् *sattvam* Sattva निर्मलत्वात् *nirmalatvāt* from its stainlessness प्रकाशकम् *prakāśakaṁ* luminous अनामयम् *anāmayaṁ* healthy सुखसङ्गेन *sukha saṅgena* by attachment to happiness बध्नाति *badhnāti* binds ज्ञानसङ्गेन *jñāna saṅgena* by attachment to knowledge च *ca* and अनघ *anagha* O sinless one

**Of these, Sattva, being stainless, is luminous and unobstructive. It binds, O sinless one, by creating attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge.**

All the three Gunas are inherent in the *Jivatman*. These Gunas again are interrelated like the three sides of a triangle. When any one side of a triangle is placed in the forefront, the other two get behind perforce. Even so is the case with the three Gunas inborn in man. In his calm and serene wakeful state, man stays in *Sattva* which nourishes him in joy and wisdom. The preponderance of *Rajas* drives him into activity. But when overwhelmed with *Tamas*, man can neither learn nor work. He yields to lethargy and sleep. In the course of a day, all the three Gunas dominate by turns, over all beings.

The ways of the Gunas are further elucidated :—

### The Symptoms of the Gunas — 11-18

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते ।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥ ११

सर्व-द्वारेषु देहे अस्मिन् प्रकाशः उप-(जन् )आ-य-ते ।
ज्ञानम् यदा तदा विद्-यात् वि-वृध्-तम् सद्-त्वम् इति उत ॥

*sarvadvāreṣu dehe 'smin prakāśa upajāyate* ।
*jñānaṁ yadā tadā vidyād vivṛddhaṁ sattvam ity uta* ॥

सर्वद्वारेषु *sarva dvāreṣu* through every gate (sense) देहे *dehe* in the body अस्मिन् *asmin* in this प्रकाश *prakāśa* wisdom-light उपजायते *upajāyate* shines ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge यदा *yadā* when तदा *tadā* then विद्यात् *vidyāt* (it) may be known विवृद्धम् *vivṛddhaṁ* (is) predominant सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva इति *iti* thus उत *uta* indeed

**When the light of knowledge beams through all the gateways of the body, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant. 11**

*rajo rāgātmakam viddhi tṛṣṇāsangasamudbhavam* ।
*tan nibadhnāti kaunteya karmasangena dehinam* ॥

रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas रागात्मकम् *rāgātmakam* of the nature of passion विद्धि *viddhi* know तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् *tṛṣṇā sanga samudbhavam* the source of thirst and attachment तत् *tat* that निबध्नाति *nibadhnāti* binds कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya कर्मसङ्गेन *karma sangena* by attachment to action देहिनम् *dehinam* the embodied one

**Know Rajas to be of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment; it binds fast, O Kaunteya, the embodied one by attachment to action. 7**

The way of the *Rajas* is to instil desire and goad one into undertaking new projects. As a dye colours the white cloth, this Guna colours the *Jivatman* red. *Trishnā* or thirst is the hankering of the mind after things not yet acquired, while *sanga* or attachment is the act of clinging on to the objects already acquired. *Rajas* engenders greed for sense-objects visible and invisible. As fuel feeds fire, *Rajas* fosters attachment to action. It creates the sense of agency in the *Jivatman*, although his ideal is to rid himself of that feeling.

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥ ८

तमः तु अ-ज्ञान-जम् विद्-(हि)धि मोहनम् सर्व-देहिनाम् ।
प्र-माद्-आलस्य-निद्राभिः तत् नि-(बन्ध्)बध्-ना-ति भारत ॥

*tamas tv ajñānajam viddhi mohanam sarvadehinām* ।
*pramādālasya nidrābhis tan nibadhnāti bhārata* ॥

not one's own is what is meant by activity here. Increasing one's activities unnecessarily and out of proportion is not the way of the wise. Any little success in a new undertaking brings in elation and any little set back in another undertaking brings in dejection. Oscillation of the mind in these ways is called unrest. A prosperous undertaking of a neighbour goads a greedy man into a similar venture. His impatience to have it done immediately is known as longing. These traits are all born of *Rajas*.

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥ १३

अ-प्र-काशः अ-प्र-वृत्-तिः च प्र-मादः मोहः एव च ।
तमसि एतानि (जन्) जा-यन्ते वि-वृद्धे कुरु-नन्दन ॥

*aprakāśo 'pravṛttiś ca pramādo moha eva ca* ।
*tamasy etāni jāyante vivṛddhe kurunandana* ॥

अप्रकाशः *aprakāśaḥ* darkness अप्रवृत्तिः *apravṛttiḥ* inertness च *ca* and प्रमादः *pramādaḥ* heedlessness मोहः *mohaḥ* delusion एव *eva* even च *ca* and तमसि *tamasi* in inertia एतानि *etāni* these जायन्ते *jāyante* arise विवृद्धे *vivṛddhe* have become predominant कुरुनन्दन *kurunandana* O descendant of Kuru

**Indiscrimination, inertness, heedlessness and delusion—these arise, O joy of the Kurus, when Tamas is predominant.** **13**

The literal meaning of the word *aprakāsa* is darkness. But the darkness of the mind lands one into indiscrimination. There is no initiative in the one lacking in discrimination. Lethargy overtakes such a dullard. He becomes heedless or indifferent

**Sattva binds one to happiness, and Rajas to action, O Bharata, while Tamas verily veils knowledge and binds one to heedlessness. 9**

The temperament predominant in a man is the indicator of the Guna in which he has moulded himself. *Sattva* is in ascendancy in the man given to pleasures ranging from the physical to the intellectual and ethical. *Rajas* dominates in him who is ever active and engages himself in all sorts of enterprises. The man who is callous about his duty, who wastes his time without compunction, who squanders his money foolishly—such a man is immersed in *Tamas*.

How do these Gunas act one over the other? It is delineated :—

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥ १०

रजः तमः च अभि-भू-य सत्त्वम् भवति भारत ।
रजः सद्-त्वम् तमः च एव तमः सत्त्वम् रजः तथा ॥

*rajas tamas cā 'bhibhūya sattvaṁ bhavati bhārata* ।
*rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamas cai 'va tamaḥ sattvaṁ rajas tathā*॥

रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas च *ca* and अभिभूय *abhibhūya* having overpowered सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva भवति *bhavati* arises भारत *bhārata* O Bharata रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas च *ca* and एव *eva* even तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas सत्त्वम् *sattvaṁ* Sattva रजः *rajaḥ* Rajas तथा *tathā* also

**Sattva asserts itself, O Bharata, by predominating over Rajas and Tamas; and Rajas, over Sattva and Tamas; and Tamas, over Sattva and Rajas. 10**

highest deity known to them is the Creator *Brahma* or the *Hiranyagarbha.* But this knowledge is not to be equated with *Brahma jnāna,* which is the finale.

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥ १५

रजसि प्र-लयम् ग(म्)-त्वा कर्म(न्)-सङ्गिषु जायते ।
तथा प्र-लीनः तमसि मूढ-योनिषु (जन्)जा-यते ॥

*rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā karmasaṅgiṣu jāyate* |
*tathā pralīnas tamasi mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate* ||

रजसि *rajasi* in Rajas प्रलयम् *pralayaṁ* death गत्वा *gatvā* meeting कर्मसङ्गिषु *karma saṅgiṣu* among those attached to action जायते *jāyate* (he) is born तथा *tathā* so प्रलीनः *pralīnaḥ* dying तमसि *tamasi* in inertia मूढयोनिषु *mūḍha yoniṣu* in the wombs of the senseless जायते *jāyate* (he) is born

**Meeting with death in Rajas, he is born among those attached to action; and, dying in Tamas, he is born in the wombs of the deluded. 15**

The already mentioned *Sāttvika* man casts off the body in all calmness and in full consciousness. The *Rajasika* man leaves the body with excitement, desire and sorrow. So he is born again as the one given to excessive activities. The *Tamasika* man dies in an unconscious state. Such a one is born again as an animal or a sub-human being.

A *Tamasika* man ought to endeavour to become a *Rajasika* man, and a *Rajasika* man, a *Sāttvika* one. Because :—

If a lamp is placed within a box fitted with glasses of various hues, its light shines through all the glasses The intensity of the light adds to the brilliance pouring out Man's body is very much like that box The sense organs are the gateways for the light of the self within to beam into view. While in *Sattva*, the effulgence of the self is at its height. And this is evinced by the functioning of the senses In the act of seeing there is sharpness, in hearing there is alertness, in performing an action there is precision accompanied by deliberation and accuracy All the senses function pleasantly at their best. These are the marks of the predominance of *Sattva*.

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥ १२

लोभ. प्र-वृत् ति॰ आरम्भ कर्मणाम् अ-शम स्पृहा ।
रजसि एतानि (जन्) जा-यन्ते वि-वृद्धे भरत-ऋषभ ॥

*lobhaḥ pravṛttir ārambhaḥ karmaṇām aśamaḥ spṛhā* |
*rajasy etāni jāyante vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha* ||

लोभः *lobhaḥ* greed प्रवृत्ति *pravṛttiḥ* activity आरम्भ *ārambhaḥ* the undertaking कर्मणाम् *karmaṇām* of actions अशम *aśamaḥ* restlessness स्पृहा *spṛhā* longing रजसि *rajasi* in Rajas एतानि *etāni* these जायन्ते *jāyante* arise विवृद्धे *vivṛddhe* having become predominant भरतर्षभ *bharatarṣabha* O bull of the Bharatas

**Greed, activity, the undertaking of actions, unrest, longing — these arise, O best of the Bharatas, when Rajas is predominant.** **12**

Attempt at making the property of others, one's own is greed. Officiously engaging oneself in matters

सत्त्वात्सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ १७

सत्त्वात् सम्-(जन्)जायते ज्ञानम् रजसः लोभः एव च ।
प्र-माद-मोहौ तमसः भव्-अ-तः अ-ज्ञानम् एव च ॥

*sattvāt saṁjāyate jñānaṁ rajaso lobha eva ca* ।
*pramādamohau tamaso bhavato 'jñānam eva ca* ॥

सत्त्वात् *sattvāt* from Sattva संजायते *saṁjāyate* arises ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge रजसः *rajasaḥ* from Rajas. लोभः *lobhaḥ* greed एव *eva* even च *ca* and प्रमादमोहौ *pramāda mohau* heedlessness and delusion तमसः *tamasaḥ* from Tamas भवतः *bhavataḥ* arise अज्ञानम् *ajñānaṁ* ignorance एव *eva* even च *ca* and

**From Sattva arises wisdom and greed from Rajas; heedlessness and error arise from Tamas, and also ignorance. 17**

What is mentioned in this stanza is the truth about the Gunas. Man should therefore ever endeavour to subdue the base Gunas in him and rise high. Moreover :—

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ १८

ऊर्ध्वम् गच्छन्ति सत्त्व-स्थाः मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्य-गुण-वृत्ति-स्थाः अधः गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥

*ūrdhvaṁ gacchanti sattvasthā madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ*
*jaghanya guṇa vṛttisthā adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ* ॥

ऊर्ध्वम् *ūrdhvaṁ* upwards गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* go सत्त्वस्थाः *sattvasthāḥ* in Sattva seated मध्ये *madhye* in the middle तिष्ठन्ति *tiṣṭhanti* dwell राजसाः *rājasāḥ* the Rajasika जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्थाः *jaghanya guṇa vṛttisthāḥ* abiding in

to progress and prosperity in life He is so much deluded that he mistakes stagnation for self-sufficiency That man becomes depraved These are all due to the predominance of *Tamas*

Is there any connection between the ascendency of the Guna and the reincarnation of the *Jivatman?* The answer comes —

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥ १४

यदा सद् त्वे प्र-वृध्-ते तु प्र-लयम् या ति देह भृत् ।
तदा उत्तम विदाम् लोकान् अमलान् प्रति-पद्-य-ते ॥

*yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu pralayam yāti dehabhṛt* ।
*tado 'ttamavidām lokān amalān pratipadyate* ॥

यदा *yadā* when सत्त्वे *sattve* in Sattva प्रवृद्धे *pravṛddhe* having become predominant तु *tu* verily प्रलयम् *pralayam* death याति *yāti* meets देहभृत् *dehabhṛt* the embodied one तदा *tadā* then उत्तमविदाम् *uttama vidām* of the knowers of the highest लोकान् *lokān* to the worlds अमलान् *amalān* of the spotless प्रतिपद्यते *pratipadyate* (he) attains

**If the embodied one meets with death when Sattva is predominant, then he goes to the pure worlds of those who know the highest. 14**

The thought uppermost in the mind at the time of departing from the body, is the deciding factor of the next birth of that *Jivatman* Because of the prevalence of *Sattva* at that juncture, godly thoughts are inevitable And *Brahma loka* is the highest among the regions obtained by the embodied The

न *na* not अन्यम् *anyaṁ* others गुणेभ्यः *guṇebhyaḥ* than the Gunas कर्तारम् *kartāraṁ* agent यदा *yadā* when द्रष्टा *draṣṭā* the seer अनुपश्यति *anupaśyati* beholds गुणेभ्यः *guṇebhyaḥ* than the qualities च *ca* and परम् *paraṁ* higher वेत्ति *vetti* knows मद्भावम् *mad bhāvaṁ* my being सः *saḥ* he अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* attains to

**When the seer perceives no agent other than the Gunas, and knows Him who is higher than the Gunas, he enters into My Being.** 19

The Prakriti is the agent for all karmas. The Gunas being none other than the Prakriti, they are equated with it. The Gunas are therefore held as agents for all the activities, no matter where they take place. The senses and the objects of the senses are all nothing but the modifications of the Gunas. To outgrow the inferior Gunas and ascend to the superior Gunas is the plan and purpose of the mundane life. Is the goal of life reached when one gets at the pure *Sattva?* Gaining the pure *Sattva* is the climax of the earthly life; but even that state has to be transcended. *Nirguna Brahman* is beyond the three Gunas. Getting into that Absolute State is the goal of life. There is neither karma nor agency in that State. It is the Highest Goal to be attained, though It cannot be defined in words.

What are the indications of Iswara revealing Himself in the heart of the devotee? The dawn is the harbinger of the sunrise. Similarly, selflessness, absence of agency, purity and such like divine qualities precede the spiritual vision of Iswara.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What is the benefit that befalls the one that transcends the Gunas? The blessing is portrayed :—

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥ १६

कर्मणः सु-कृ-तस्य आहुः सात्त्विकम् निर्-मलम् फलम् ।
रजसः तु फलम् दुःखम् अ-ज्ञानम् तमसः फलम् ॥

*karmanaḥ sukṛtasyā 'huḥ sāttvikam nirmalam phalam*
*rajasas tu phalaṁ duḥkham ajñānam tamasaḥ phalam*

कर्मणः *karmanaḥ* of action सुकृतस्य *sukṛtasya* (of) good आहुः *āhuḥ* (they) say सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikam* Sattvika निर्मलम् *nirmalam* pure फलम् *phalam* the fruit रजसः *rajasaḥ* of Rajas तु *tu* verily फलम् *phalam* the fruit दुःखम् *duḥkham* pain अज्ञानम् *ajñānam* ignorance तमसः *tamasaḥ* of inertia फलम् *phalam* the fruit

**The fruit of good action, they say, is Sattvika and pure; verily the fruit of Rajas is pain, and ignorance is the fruit of Tamas. 16**

*Tamas* engulfs man either in inertia or in wicked deeds which prevent him from making upward progress. *Rajas* is the one instrument to save man from stagnation and lead him to prosperity. It drives him on to incessant action; but the nature of karma is to bring misery in its train. And this misery is no ill luck. It has a great purpose to serve. Nothing else equals misery for inducing man to soar high. In the training ground of misery he gets his character shaped. Consequently dharma emanates from him. Ultimately dharma or good conduct lifts him to *Sattva* which is all purity and brilliance.

In what other respects do the Gunas get themselves distinguished one from the other? The answer comes:—

An occasion now arises for Arjuna to raise a doubt; and he avails himself of it.

**The Definition of the One who has Transcended the Gunas—21-27**

अर्जुन उवाच

कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते ॥ २१

कैः लिङ्गैः त्रीन् गुणान् एतान् अति-इतः भवति प्रभो ।
किम्-आचारः कथम् च एतान् त्रीन् गुणान् अति-वर्त्-अते ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*kair liṅgais trīn guṇān etān atīto bhavati prabho |*
*kimācāraḥ kathaṁ cai 'tāṁs trīn guṇān ativartate ||*

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

कैः *kaiḥ* by what लिङ्गैः *liṅgaiḥ* by marks त्रीन् *trīn* three गुणान् *guṇān* Gunas एतान् *etān* these अतीतः *atītaḥ* crossed भवति *bhavati* becomes प्रभो *prabho* O Lord किं आचारः *kiṁ ācāraḥ* what (is his) conduct कथम् *katham* how च *ca* and एतान् *etān* these त्रीन् *trīn* three गुणान् *guṇān* Gunas अतिवर्तते *ativartate* goes beyond

**Arjuna said:**

**What are the marks, O Lord, of him who has crossed over the three Gunas? What is his conduct? And how does he rise above the Gunas? 21**

Here are three questions linked together. They are being severally answered.

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥ २२

the function of the lowest Guna अधः *adhaḥ* downwards गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* go तामसा *tāmasāḥ* the Tamasika

**Those who are fixed in Sattva go upwards; the Rajasikas remain in the middle; and the Tamasikas, abiding in the functions of the lowest Guna, go downwards. 18**

There is an inviolable relationship between the change of the Gunas in the *Jivatman* and his being born high or low The one fixed in *Sattva* may be born a celestial if he is inclined towards enjoyment of pleasures But if his bent is towards knowledge and wisdom he takes a suitable human birth and strives for further progress in that direction The man of *Rajas* is ever active in all of his births For want of proper discrimination he does not head for higher births, nor does he deteriorate to lower births He maintains the position he has gained and waits for the dawn of discrimination to guide him upwards But the man steeped in *Tamas* wallows in the nether regions

Is it sufficient if man aspires to *Sattva* and gets established there? The answer comes —

**Transcending the Gunas is Mukti — 19 20**

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥ १९

न अन्यम् गुणेभ्य कर्तारम् यदा द्रष्टा अनु-पश्य्-अति ।
गुणेभ्य च परम् वेद् ति मद् भावम् स अधि गच्छति ॥

*nā 'nyam gunebhyah kartāram yadā draṣṭā 'nupaśyati*
*gunebhyaś ca param vetti mad bhāvam so 'dhigacchati*

The man caught up in *Rajas* is always up and doing. What seems good to him, he executes devotedly; and what other is held bad by him, is abhorred and avoided. Going to the temple regularly and doing ritualistic worship elaborately are all aspects of his life, too holy to be given up. But the man who has gone beyond the Gunas holds all these observances as mere schooling. Nothing is gained by him by sticking on to them and nothing is lost by relinquishing them. Any and every good action is devotedly done by him, and he is equally superb when nothing at all is done. But it is impossible for any bad deed to emanate from him.

To the man adhering to *Tamas*, lethargy and sleep are most welcome. He is very much annoyed if his sleep is disturbed. But that man who has crossed over the Gunas treats sleep and wakefulness alike. His body is given the required repose which automatically gets reduced to its bare minimum in the enlightened man.

The *Brahma jnāni* who has soared beyond the three Gunas evinces merits found in a mirror. It truly reflects the objects placed before it. When nothing is presented before it, it remains in its own state. The mirror is in no way affected by the appearance and disappearance of things in its proximity. Similar to this is the place gained by the three Gunas in the mind of the *Muni* who has transcended them. While they come and go, he remains unaffected by them.

How do the *Jivan muktas*, the liberated souls, live in the world? They live like the kingfisher that dives deep into the water

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ २०

गुणान् एतान् अति-इ-त्-य त्रीन् देही देह सम् उद्-भवान् ।
जन्म-मृत्यु-जरा-दुःखै वि-मुक्त अ-मृतम् अश्-नुते ॥

*gunān etān atītya trīn dehī dehasamudbhavān* |
*janma mṛtyu jarā duḥkhair vimukto 'mṛtam aśnute* ||

गुणान् *gunān* Gunas एतान् *etān* these अतीत्य *atītya* having crossed त्रीन् *trīn* three देही *dehī* the embodied देहसमुद्भवान् *deha samudbhavān* out of which the body is evolved जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखै *janma mṛtyu jarā duḥkhaiḥ* from birth, death, decay and pain विमुक्त *vimuktaḥ* freed अमृतम् *amṛtam* immortality अश्नुते *aśnute* attains to

**The embodied one having crossed over these three Gunas out of which the body is evolved, is freed from birth, death, decay and pain, and attains to immortality. 20**

The plenitude of *Brahma jnāna* is explained here. The *Jivatman* resides in the body which is made up of the three Gunas, but his ideal is not to identify himself with his residence Pain due to birth, decay and death is to that *Jivatman* only who identifies himself with the body A *Jīvanmukta* is he who is free from body consciousness even while dwelling in the body Fixed as he is in the Bliss of Brahman, he has virtually transcended the three Gunas

The body has its birth and death But the Atman is free from these modifications He is like the areca nut in its shell When still tender, this nut and its shell hold fast to each other but when ripe the nut separates itself from the shell In *Brahma jnana* the body consciousness drops away

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

*sama duḥkha sukhaḥ svasthaḥ sama loṣṭāśma kāñcanaḥ*
*tulyapriyāpriyo dhīras tulyanindātmasaṁstutiḥ* ||

समदुःखसुखः *sama duḥkha sukhaḥ* alike in pleasure and pain स्वस्थः *svasthaḥ* standing in his own Self समलोष्ट अश्मकाञ्चनः *sama loṣṭa aśma kāñcanaḥ* regarding a clod of earth, a stone and gold alike तुल्यप्रिय अप्रियः *tulya priya apriyaḥ* the same to the dear and the disliked धीरः *dhīraḥ* firm तुल्यनिन्दा आत्मसंस्तुतिः *tulya nindā ātma saṁstutiḥ* the same in censure and praise

**Balanced in pleasure and pain, Self-abiding, viewing a clod of earth, a stone and gold alike; the same to agreeable and disagreeable, firm, the same in censure and praise; 24**

The Gunas have assumed the form of the human body; they have also assumed the forms of various objects. And these forms interact on one another. The Atman is no party to these interactions. The knower of the Atman remains as Atman, unconcerned with the workings of the Gunas.

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥ २५

मान-अप-मानयोः तुल्यः तुल्यः मित्र-अरि-पक्षयोः ।
सर्व-आ-रम्भ-परि-त्यागी गुण-अति-इ-तः सः उच्यते ॥

*mānāpamānayos tulyas tulyo mitrāripakṣayoḥ* |
*sarvārambhaparityāgī guṇātītaḥ sa ucyate* ||

मान अपमानयोः *māna apamānayoḥ* in honour and dishonour तुल्यः *tulyaḥ* the same तुल्यः *tulyaḥ* the same मित्र अरिपक्षयोः *mitra ari pakṣayoḥ* to friend and foe सर्व आरम्भ परित्यागी *sarva ārambha parityāgī* abandoning all

प्रकाशम् च प्र-वृत्-तिम् च मोहम् एव च पाण्डव ।
न द्वेष्टि सम्-प्र-वृत्तानि न नि-वृत्-तानि काङ्क्षति ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*prakāśaṁ ca pravṛttim ca moham eva ca pāṇḍava* ।
*na dveṣṭi sampravṛttāni na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said: प्रकाशम् *prakāśam* light च *ca* and प्रवृत्तिम् *pravṛttim* activity च *ca* and मोहम् *moham* delusion एव *eva* even च *ca* and पाण्डव *pāṇḍava* O Pandava न *na* not द्वेष्टि *dveṣṭi* hates सम्प्रवृत्तानि *sampravṛttāni* (when) gone forth न *na* not निवृत्तानि *nivṛttāni* when absent काङ्क्षति *kāṅkṣati* longs

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**He, O Pandava, who hates not light, activity and delusion, when present, nor longs after them when absent; 22**

The man immersed in *Sattva* has his intellectual pursuits and refined pleasures in which he is deeply absorbed. Scriptural learning has a remarkable hold on the devotee. Pious discourse, rapturous *Bhajana*, deep meditation—all these are meticulously practised by the man of *Sāttvika* disposition. If these doings are interrupted or dropped out for a day, the aspirant feels as if a great spiritual loss has been inflicted on him. This feeling is the sign of his being attached to *Sattva Guna*. But the man who has transcended the Gunas has nothing to gain by adhering to these observances and nothing to lose by abandoning them. With or without these good occupations the *Brahma jnāni* ever rests in Brahman.

**And he who serves Me with an unswerving devotion, he, going beyond the Gunas, is fitted for becoming Brahman. 26**

Extreme devotion surges in the heart of the devotee who has made himself over to the Lord. He has nothing but Narayana to cognize both within and without. This intense fervour ends with his becoming Brahman. As darkness disappears when light comes, the three Gunas disappear when the dawn of the *Brahma jnāna* takes place.

The devotee sees Iswara in many forms. But when he gets into *Samadhi* this very Iswara is realized by him as the formless Infinite *Nirguna Brahman*. It is in this realization that *Bhakti* and *Jnana* get harmonized.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is Bhakti the only means to go beyond the Gunas? The elucidation comes:—

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥ २७

ब्रह्मणः हि प्रति-(स्था)ष्ठा अहम् अ-मृतस्य अ-वि-अयस्य च ।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्य एकान्तिकस्य च ॥

*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhā 'ham amṛtasyā 'vyayasya ca* ।
*śāśvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyai 'kāntikasya ca* ॥

ब्रह्मणः *brahmaṇaḥ* of Brahman हि *hi* indeed प्रतिष्ठा *pratiṣṭhā* the abode अहम् *ahaṁ* I अमृतस्य *amṛtasya* the immortal अव्ययस्य *avyayasya* (of) the immutable च *ca* and शाश्वतस्य *śāśvatasya* (of) everlasting च *ca* and धर्मस्य *dharmasya* of dharma सुखस्य *sukhasya* of bliss एकान्तिकस्य *ekāntikasya* absolute च *ca* and

to catch fish, but does not get wet The few drops that happen to be on its feathers are shaken off with ease The liberated souls are unaffected by the happenings in the world

—Sri Ramakrishna

This is in answer to the first question put by Arjuna

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥ २३

उद् आस् इन वद् आसीन गुणै य न वि-चाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इति एव य अव तिष्ठति न इङ्गत ॥

*udāsinavad āsino gunair yo na vicālyate* ।
*gunā vartanta ity eva yo 'vatiṣṭhati ne 'ngate* ॥

उदासीनवत् *udāsinavat* like one unconcerned आसीन *āsinaḥ* seated गुणै *gunaiḥ* by the Gunas य *yaḥ* who न *na* not विचाल्यते *vicālyate* is moved गुणा *gunāḥ* the Gunas वर्तन्ते *vartante* operate इति *iti* thus एव *eva* even य *yaḥ* who अवतिष्ठति *avatisthati* is self-centred न *na* not इङ्गते *ingate* moves

**He who, sitting like one unconcerned, is moved not by the Gunas, who, knowing that the Gunas operate, is firm and moves not; 23**

A hill does not shake while the trees, plants and creepers on it shake when the wind blows The Gunas move in the *Brahma jnāni* but he remains calm, steady and unconcerned with the happenings in the world

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥ २४

सम दुःख-सुख स्व-स्थ सम-लोष्ट अश्म-काञ्चन ।
तुल्य प्रिय अप्रिय धीर तुल्य निन्दा आत्म-सम् स्तुति ॥

relieved of all of his possessions. The first highwayman then drew out his dagger to do away with the victim. The second bandit pleaded against such a drastic measure and voted for binding the fellow fast and leaving him to his fate. This counsel was acted upon and the thieves quitted the scene. But in a short while, the soft-hearted third robber reappeared, released the victimized man and kindly showed him his way back home. The grateful wayfarer requested this unexpected saviour to go along with him and accept his gratitude and hospitality. But the stranger politely expressed his inability to go beyond his bounds and disappeared into the forest.

This world is the forest. The three Gunas are the three thieves. The *Jivatman* is the wayfarer. The divine qualities are his possessions. Of the three Gunas, *Tamas* tries to destroy him. *Rajas* binds him with lust, greed and anger. *Sattva* saves him from these fetters and shows him the way Godward. But Guna as it is, *Sattva* cannot have access to the proximity of Brahman.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम
चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde guṇatraya vibhāgayogo nāma caturdaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fourteenth discourse designated :

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE GUNAS

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undertakings गुण अतीत *guna atitah* crossed beyond the Gunas स *sah* he उच्यते *ucyate* is said

**The same in honour and dishonour, the same to friend and foe, abandoning all undertakings — he is said to have risen above the Gunas. 25**

Honour and dishonour, friendship and enmity— dualities such as these exist for him who is bound by the Gunas and for him who is ignorant Because of the persistence of the *Jivāhood*, the engaging of oneself in personal undertakings becomes possible But these limitations are not for him who has gone beyond the three Gunas

These three stanzas are in reply to the second question raised by Arjuna

The third and the last question is being answered now —

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान्ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ २६

माम् च य अ-वि-अभि-चारेण भक्ति-योगन सेवते ।
स गुणान् सम्-अति-इ त्-य एतान् ब्रह्म-भूयाय कल्पते ॥

*mām ca yo 'vyabhicārena bhaktiyogena sevate* ।
*sa gunān samatītyai 'tān brahmabhūyāya kalpate* ॥

माम् *mām* me च *ca* and य *yah* who अव्यभिचारेण *avyabhicārena* unswerving भक्तियोगेन *bhakti yogena* with devotion सेवते *sevate* serves स *sah* he गुणान् *gunan* Gunas समतीत्य *samatitya* crossing beyond एतान् *etān* these ब्रह्मभूयाय *brahma bhūyāya* for becoming Brahman कल्पते *kalpate* is fitted

The word *Asvattha* means that which is not today as it was yesterday. This word refers to *Samsāra* or phenomenal existence. It is imperishable but not constant and steady. This *Samsāra* has its origin in Brahman and as it branches down, it gets more and more materialized. *Asvattha* also means the peepul tree which belongs to the banyan family. The speciality of the banyan tree is that it supplies sap from above and sends the branches down into the earth. In this respect the functioning of the *Samsāra* resembles that of this tree. Both of them receive their sustenance from above and come down to earthly existence. In the unmanifest state Brahman and *Sakti* are the same. Therefore the latter is as imperishable as the former. *Sakti* is the inexhaustible source of the *Samsāra* or the Prakriti, with its innumerable modifications.

The tree is both a symbol and an entity revealing life. It aids the study of life in all its aspects all over the Prakriti. That life is self-expressive is made known to us by the leaves of the tree. *The varieties of life* are also indicated by the leaves; they enable us to distinguish one tree from another. Parallel to this are the *chandāmsi* or the hymns in the Vedas. Through these hymns the expression of life all over Nature is suggested to the seeker of knowledge. Hymns in the Vedas are the general term used for all the branches of knowledge. Organic chemistry, biology, botany, physiology, natural science, human history—all these and more are all revelations of life at various levels. The positive expression of life is upheld as virtue and the negative expression

**For I am the Abode of Brahman, the Immortal, and the Immutable, the Eternal Dharma and Absolute Bliss. 27**

All the four Yogas are herein harmonized. Bhakti and the attainment of the *Saguna Brahman* through it have been explained in the previous stanza. The Immortal and the Immutable Brahman or the *Nirguna Brahman* is reached by Jnana yoga By serving the Lord through Karma yoga, the *Eternal Dharma* or the *Sanātana Dharma* which is another name for Brahman is made one's own The practice of Raja yoga culminates in the creation of *Amrita dhāra*, the Divine Nectar which provides Absolute Bliss which is another name for Brahman. Thus all the four yogas are paths by pursuing which the *sadhaka* gets beyond the three Gunas The right course is to adopt all these four yogas simultaneously. He who does so traverses the three Gunas and gets into Brahman who is supremely beyond them.

This is the answer to the last question.

Mythology has it that the Lord Siva made elaborate preparations to invade and lay siege to the iron, silver and golden citadels of three mighty Asuras who were invincible Finally, the great Lord's opening His divine eye resulted in the total destruction of the Demons and their domains This is a mythological presentation of the transcendence of the three Gunas with the aid of Self-knowledge.

A wayfarer was passing through a dense forest Three thieves sprang on him and overpowered him Forthwith he was

vigorously engaged in vanquishing the Demon known as Mahishasura. Like a buffalo as his name indicates, he is pervert and adamant. This Demon is the embodiment of *Tamas*, the lowest of the three Gunas. The energy spent in putting him down is a landmark in the process of the evolution of life. It is an indication of the sentient emerging from the insentient. Philosophically *Rajas* gets the upper hand over *Tamas*. The gold colour of Mother Durga with Her red raiment symbolizes *Rajas* with its capacity to enrich the phenomenal life. Sarasvati the goddess of learning, Lakshmi the goddess of wealth, Subrahmanya the god of valour and Ganesa the god of wisdom, all attending on the Cosmic Mother indicate the ways and means for enriching the earthly life. Just above the head of Durga, the snow white Lord Siva is seated absorbed in deep meditation. This is the symbol of *Sattva* which transforms all earthly activities into spiritual activities. Ultimately the Gunas are transcended and the Absolute is attained. All turmoils are down below in the physical life. But as one progresses towards the Atman, life gets refined. Ultimately life in the Prakriti is transcended and Godhood is reached.

How the earthly life is to be enriched is explained in the following stanza :—

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥ २

अधः च ऊर्ध्वम् प्र-सृ-ताः तस्य शाखाः गुण-प्र-वृद्धाः विषय-प्रवालाः ।
अधः च मूलानि अनु-सम्-त(न्)-तानि कर्म-अनुबन्धीनि मनुष्य-लोके ॥

# पुरुषोत्तमयोगः

## PURUSHOTTAMA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF THE SUPREME SELF

## CHAPTER XV

The Tree of Life — Cut the Tree to get Moksha — The Competent Ones — The Supreme Abode — Jivatman Defined — The Divine Eye — The Immanence of the Paramatman — The Facets of Brahman

### The Tree of Life — 1-2

श्री भगवानुवाच

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखं अश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥ १

ऊर्ध्व-मूलम् अध शाखम् अश्वत्थम् प्र-आहु अ-वि-अयम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि य तम् वेद सः वेद-वित ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*ūrdhvamūlam adhaḥśākham aśvattham prāhur avyayam*
*chandāmsi yasya parnāni yas tam veda sa vedavit* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

ऊर्ध्वमूलम् *ūrdhva mūlam* rooted above अध शाखम् *adhah śākham* branches below अश्वत्थम् *aśvattham* the Asvattha प्राहु *prāhuḥ* they speak of अव्ययम् *avyayam* indestructible छन्दांसि *chandāmsi* metres of hymns यस्य *yasya* of which पर्णानि *parnāni* leaves य *yaḥ* who तम् *tam* that वेद *veda* knows स *sah* he वेदवित् *vedavit* (is) Veda-knower

**The Blessed Lord said**

**They speak of an imperishable Asvattha tree with its root above and branches below Its leaves are the Vedas; he who knows it is the knower of the Vedas. 1**

and thriving of the tree of *Samsāra* is inevitable as long as the Gunas supply the sap.

The tap-root and the subsidiary roots are the two types of roots functioning in a tree. The tap-root together with the trunk is the seat of life to the tree. Since Iswara is the source of the *Jagat* which has materialized from Him, He is regarded as the tap-root sustaining it from above. The multifarious activities on the earth are the branching subsidiary roots nourishing this tree of *Samsāra*. By pruning and treating the slender branch roots occasionally, the growth of the tree is augmented. Parallel to this, man improves his lot by reforming and readjusting his activities. Karma aids him reconstitute his nature. It is karma again that binds man to varying tendencies and provides momentum to prolong the wheel of birth. Made of karma as the *Jīvātmās* are, the root that represents it is said to be all-pervading in the universe. In other words, karma and Prakriti are inseparable.

**Cut the Tree to get Moksha — 3-4**

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा ।
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूलमसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥ ३

न रूपम् अस्य इह तथा उप-लभ्-यते न अन्तः न च आदिः न च सम्-प्रतिष्ठा ।
अश्वत्थम् एनम् सु-वि-रूढ-मूलम् अ-सङ्ग-शस्त्रेण दृढेन छिद्-त्वा ॥

*na rūpam asye 'ha tatho 'palabhyate*
*nā 'nto na cā 'dir na ca sampratiṣṭhā* ।
*aśvattham enaṁ suvirūḍhamūlam*
*asaṅgaśastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā* ॥

discarded as vice The Vedas show the ways of employing life both for good and bad. This transitory life transforms itself into the Life Absolute when *Brahma jnāna* is obtained. Short of that Enlightenment, this mundane existence drags on painfully without beginning and without end. It is therefore called *avyayam* — the imperishable.

He who reads and understands the compiled books called the Vedas is not the real *Vedavit* — the knower of the Vedas. These books are mere aids and guides He alone is a *Vedavit* who truly sees into the marvellous working of Nature. Prakriti is the true imperishable Veda, projected by the Maker.

A man standing outside a market-place hears a general buzz, nothing is distinct. But his perspective changes as soon as he enters into the market. The transactions are all clearly heard and understood Similarly when a man is away from Iswara, his inquiry is all in confusion There is no end to his search into the cause and effect, to his cogitating over the why and how of the things, to his debates, to his arguments and counter-arguments and to his theorizing But on the realization of Iswara all these speculations and conjectures come to an end. The mystery of Nature becomes an open book to him

— Sri Ramakrishna

That the Prakriti is constituted of the three Gunas and that the Paramatman is supremely above the Prakriti was presented in chapter fourteen. This chapter deals with the fact that the Prakriti branches down from its Source which is the Paramatman The symbol of the Cosmic Mother Durga expounds these facts very graphically. She is

mind. This is the allegorical meaning of cutting asunder the firm-rooted *Asvattha* tree.

The silkworm gets encaged in the cocoon spun by itself. Similarly the worldly man gets entangled in the meshes of his own desires. But when the silkworm develops into a butterfly, it breaks open its nest and comes out to enjoy the light and air outside. Similarly when the man in bondage cuts asunder his attachment to *Maya*, he is able to behold Brahman.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

**ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।**
**तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ ४**

ततः पदम् तत् परि-मार्गितव्यम् यस्मिन् ग(म्)-ताः न नि-वर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तम् एव च आद्यम् पुरुषम् प्र-पद्ये यतः प्र-वृत्-तिः प्र-सृ-ता पुराणी ॥

*tataḥ padaṁ tat parimārgitavyaṁ*
*yasmin gatā na nivartan i bhūyaḥ* ।
*tam eva cā 'dyaṁ puruṣaṁ prapadye*
*yataḥ pravṛttiḥ prasṛtā purāṇī* ॥

ततः *tataḥ* then पदम् *padaṁ* goal तत् *tat* that परिमार्गितव्यम् *parimārgitavyaṁ* should be sought for यस्मिन् *yasmin* whither गताः *gatāḥ* gone न *na* not निवर्तन्ति *nivartanti* return भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again तम् *taṁ* in that एव *eva* even च *ca* and आद्यम् *ādyaṁ* primeval पुरुषम् *puruṣaṁ* Purusha प्रपद्ये *prapadye* I seek refuge यतः *yataḥ* whence प्रवृत्तिः *pravṛttiḥ* activity प्रसृता *prasṛtā* streamed forth पुराणी *purāṇī* ancient

**Then that Goal should be sought for, going whither, they do not return again. I seek refuge in that Primeval Purusha whence streamed forth the Eternal Activity. 4**

Recoiling from the attachment to the world is a negative act, producing no far-reaching effect. It

*adhaś co 'rdhvaṁ prasṛtās tasya śākhā*
*guṇapravṛddhā-viṣayapravālāḥ* ।
*adhaś ca mūlāny anusaṁtatāni*
*karmānubandhīni manuṣyaloke* ॥

अधः *adhaḥ* below च *ca* and ऊर्ध्वम् *ūrdhvaṁ* above प्रसृताः *prasṛtāḥ* spread तस्य *tasya* its शाखाः *śākhāḥ* branches गुणप्रवृद्धाः *guṇa pravṛddhāḥ* nourished by the Gunas विषयप्रवालाः *viṣaya pravālāḥ* sense-objects are its buds अधः *adhaḥ* below च *ca* and मूलानि *mūlāni* the roots अनुसंततानि *anusaṁtatāni* are stretched forth कर्म अनुबन्धीनि *karma anubandhīni* originating action मनुष्यलोके *manuṣya loke* in the world of men

**Below and above spread its branches, nourished by the Gunas; sense-objects are its buds; and below in the world of men stretch forth the roots, engendering action. 2**

The analogy between the peepul tree and the *Samsāra* comprising of the phenomenal existence continues to be kept up. The branches of the tree spread profusely above and below. To the tree of the *Samsāra*, Brahmaloka and such like regions are the branches growing above and the regions of men and other inferior beings are the branches coming down. The enlightened ones assume superior births and those others devoid of understanding take inferior births. Buds and twigs are put forth only by those branches which are full of sap. The functioning of the three Gunas supplies the required sap and the feasting of the senses on the sense-objects puts forth the buds and twigs. The sprouting, leafing

निर्-मान-मोहाः जित-सङ्ग-दोषाः अध्यात्म-नित्याः वि-निवृत्-त-कामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैः वि-मुक्ताः सुख-दुःख-संज्ञैः गच्छ्-अ-अन्ति अ-मूढाः पदम् अ-व्ययम् तत् ॥

*nirmānamohā jitasaṅgadoṣā*
*adhyātmanityā vinivṛttakāmāḥ* ।
*dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukhaduḥkhasaṁjñair*
*gacchanty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayaṁ tat* ॥

निर्मानमोहाः *nirmāna mohāḥ* free from pride and delusion जितसङ्गदोषाः *jita saṅga doṣāḥ* victorious over the evil of attachment अध्यात्मनित्याः *adhyātma nityāḥ* dwelling constantly in the self विनिवृत्तकामाः *vinivṛtta kāmāḥ* desires having completely turned away द्वन्द्वैः *dvandvaiḥ* from the pairs of opposites विमुक्ताः *vimuktāḥ* freed सुखदुःखसंज्ञैः *sukha duḥkha saṁjñaiḥ* known as pleasure and pain गच्छन्ति *gacchanti* reach अमूढाः *amūḍhāḥ* the undeluded पदम् *padaṁ* goal अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* eternal तत् *tat* that

**Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, their desires being completely stilled, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that Goal Eternal.** 5

Ridding the mind of all impurities and fixing it on Atman — these are the twofold intents on which the *sadhaka* engages himself. The mind becomes all-powerful as it gains in purity. Because of its purity it gains access to Atman. The greatest and the holiest of its achievements lies in its getting fixed in the Atman. Man becomes god through this benign act of the mind.

The bound soul is man; the freed soul is Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

न *na* not रूपम् *rūpaṁ* form अस्य *asya* its इह *iha* here तथा *tathā* as such उपलभ्यते *upalabhyate* is perceived न *na* not अन्त: *antaḥ* end न *na* not च *ca* and आदि: *ādiḥ* origin न *na* not च *ca* and संप्रतिष्ठा *sampratiṣṭhā* foundation अश्वत्थम् *aśvatthaṁ* Asvattha एनम् *enam* this सुविरूढ मूलम् *suvirūḍha mūlam* firm-rooted असङ्गशस्त्रेण *asanga śastreṇa* with the axe of non-attachment दृढेन *dṛdhena* strong छित्त्वा *chittvā* having cut asunder

**Its form is not here perceived as such, neither its end, nor its origin, nor its existence. Having cut asunder this firm-rooted Asvattha with the strong axe of non-attachment; 3**

This *Asvattha* tree of mundane existence has no stability whatsoever. It is ever in a state of flux. It changes its patterns more quickly than we are able to comprehend. Its origin is beyond the ken of man ; all the same, its end can be predicted. The phenomenon vanishes to the one having *Brahma jnāna*. But it continues to exist for all the others who are still in ignorance. Can the ordinary man posit anything about it ? It is partially determinant; beyond a limit it is unknown and-unknowable.

However firm-rooted a tree may be, it can be felled with an axe. Non-attachment is the axe to cut down the tree of *Samsāra*. The sharper this weapon, the quicker is the result obtained. *Vairāgya* or complete dispassion is the benign outcome of non-attachment. It is a criterion for being blessed with the spiritual eye. The spectacle of the universe undergoes a dramatic change when the cognition of the mind gives place to the intuition of the super-

himself with this Absolute Consciousness gains *Mukti*. He does not individualize himself any more.

When pure camphor is lit, it leaves no residue. When mentation is absolved in *Samadhi*, the distinctions such as 'I,' 'You' and the objective world vanish. Brahman, the *Suddha Chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness alone remains.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does the *Jivatman* first remain alien to the Paramatman and then get subsequently unified with Him? The answer comes :—

Jivatman Defined — 7-9

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनः षष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ ७

मम एव अंशः जीव-लोके जीव-भूतः सनातनः ।
मनः-षष्ठानि इन्द्रियाणि प्र-कृति-स्थानि कर्षति ॥

*mamai 'vā 'ṁśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ* ।
*manaḥ ṣaṣṭhānī 'ndriyāṇi prakṛtisthāni karṣati* ॥

मम *mama* my एव *eva* even अंशः *aṁśaḥ* portion जीवलोके *jīva loke* in the world of life जीवभूतः *jīva bhūtaḥ* having become a soul सनातनः *sanātanaḥ* eternal मनःषष्ठानि *manaḥ ṣaṣṭhāni* with mind as the sixth इन्द्रियाणि *indriyāṇi* the indriyas प्रकृतिस्थानि *prakṛtisthāni* abiding in Prakriti कर्षति *karṣati* draws (to itself)

**An eternal portion of Myself having become the Jiva in the world of Jivas, attracts the senses, with mind as the sixth, abiding in Prakriti.** 7

A drop of rain water is alien to the sea before falling into it. But the *Jivatman* is never an entity separate or independent of the Paramatman. As a wave is ever part of the sea, the individual soul

has therefore to be made to take a positive turn. Aspiring ardently for the *Brahmāvastha* is what is wanted. Giving oneself over to the Prakriti and giving oneself over to the Supreme Purusha – these acts are opposed to each other and produce opposite results. The former breeds ignorance and promotes bondage of the *Jivatman* to the wheel of birth and death, while the latter liberates and leads him into the plenitude of Brahman. The intensity and the completeness of the dedication to Brahman hastens the spiritual enlightenment of the *sadhaka.*

As clouds come forth from the sea, the Prakriti of the Eternal Activity ever streams forth from Brahman, the Primeval Purusha. The eternal process of the appearance and disappearance of Prakriti does not in any way affect the Supreme Purusha. The detachment from the Prakriti and the staunch attachment to the Supreme Purusha are the potent means for the destruction of the tree of *Samsāra* of the *Jivatman.*

On detection the thief takes to his heels. Similarly when you see into the nature of *Maya* it disappears from you.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The weaning of the *Jivatman* from the Prakriti and his being wedded to the Paramatman are expatiated upon as follows :—

Who gains Mukti ?

**The Competent Ones — 5**

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥ ५

The real nature of the *Jivatman* is *Sat-chit-ananda.* But through egoism he has assumed several *upadhis*-limiting adjuncts and has forgotten his real nature.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How does the *Jivatman* assume the *upādhis?* The answer comes :—

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥ ८

शरीरम् यत् अव-आप्-नोति यत् च अपि उत्-क्रामति ईश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वा एतानि सम्-याति वायुः गन्धान् इव आशयात् ॥

*śarīraṁ yad avāpnoti yac cā 'py utkrāmatī 'śvaraḥ* ।
*gṛhītvai 'tāni saṁyāti vāyur gandhān ivā 'śayāt* ॥

शरीरम् *śarīraṁ* a body यत् *yat* when अवाप्नोति *avāpnoti* obtains यत् *yat* when च *ca* and अपि *api* also उत्क्रामति *utkrāmati* leaves ईश्वरः *īśvaraḥ* the lord गृहीत्वा *gṛhītvā* taking एतानि *etāni* these संयाति *saṁyāti* goes वायुः *vāyuḥ* the wind गन्धान् *gandhān* the scents इव *iva* as आशयात् *āśayāt* from seats

**When the lord obtains a body and when he leaves it, he takes these and goes, as the wind carries the scents from their sources.** **8**

The *Jivatman* is called the lord here because of his suzerainty over the body and the senses. The wind is smell-less by itself, but it acquires the scent inherent in the flowers. It is also capable of relinquishing those scents by and by. The *Jivatman* assumes the *upādhis* due to his attachment to the Prakriti; but as he detaches himself from it, he resumes his contentless consciousness. However, as long as he keeps up his concern with the Prakriti,

The Supreme Abode — 6

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ ६

न तद् भासयते सूर्य न शश-अङ्क न पावक ।
यत् ग(म्)-त्वा न नि वर्तन्ते तद् धाम परमम् मम ॥

*na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ* ।
*yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama* ॥

न *na* not तत् *tat* that भासयते *bhāsayate* illumines सूर्य *sūryaḥ* the sun न *na* not शशाङ्क *śaśānkaḥ* the moon न *na* not पावक *pāvakaḥ* fire यत् *yat* to which गत्वा *gatvā* having gone न *na* not निवर्तन्ते *nivartante* they return तत् *tat* that धाम *dhāma* abode परमम् *paramam* supreme मम *mama* my

**That the sun illumines not, nor the moon, nor fire; that is My Supreme Abode, going whither they return not. 6**

On entering the sea, a river gets merged in it In this wise, when realization comes, the *Jivatman* merges his individuality in the Paramatman A man in a pitch dark room does not cognize his body, but he retains the feeling, 'I am ' Neither the sun, nor the moon nor fire is required by him to point out his awareness, 'I am ' It is self-evident and self-sufficient This awareness is *Prajnānam* It is the eternal factor in man While seeming to be sullied, or while playing hide and seek, It is actually ever Itself This Awareness as Pure Consciousness is eulogized as the Supreme State It is infinite and immovable It neither dies nor is it born It is unaffected by time, space and causation The *Jivatman* who identifies

But the *Jivatman* residing in the fort of his body gets all his requirements through the five senses. Sound the adjunct of *ākāsa* comes to him through the ear. The eye functions to bring the message of light and form, the adjunct of fire. The sense of touch which is the adjunct of air pervades all over his body intimating him of heat and cold in the environment. Taste is the adjunct of water and the tongue serves him in this respect. The nose conveys to him the sense of smell, it being the adjunct of earth. And mind is the interpreter of the data brought in by all these senses. The *Jivatman* is cherished by all these six instruments, keeping him in contact with the external world.

**The Divine Eye — 10-11**

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥ १०

उद्-क्रामन्तम् (स्था)स्थि-तम् वा अपि भुञ्जानम् वा गुण-अनु-इ-तम् ।
वि-मूढाः न अनु-पश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञान-चक्षुषः ॥

*utkrāmantaṁ sthitaṁ vā 'pi bhuñjānaṁ vā guṇānvitam*
*vimūḍhā nā 'nupaśyanti paśyanti jñāna cakṣuṣaḥ* ॥

उत्क्रामन्तम् *utkrāmantaṁ* departing स्थितम् *sthitaṁ* staying वा *vā* or अपि *api* also भुञ्जानम् *bhuñjānaṁ* enjoying वा *vā* or गुणान्वितम् *guṇānvitaṁ* united with the Gunas विमूढाः *vimūḍhāḥ* the deluded न अनुपश्यन्ति *na anupaśyanti* do not see पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* behold ज्ञानचक्षुषः *jñāna cakṣuṣaḥ* those who possess the eye of knowledge

**The deluded do not see him who departs, stays and enjoys, who is conjoined with the Gunas, but they see, who possess the eye of wisdom. 10**

is eternally part and parcel of Iswara. A *Jivatman* is one who thinks through ignorance that he is bound in Prakriti. It is by identification with Prakriti that he evolves the five senses and the mind. These instruments develop in him because of his ceaseless desire for self-expression and contact with the external world. He is called a *Bhoktā* or a *Bhogin* due to his indulgence in the external world through the senses. He is said to be in the world of *Jīvās* as long as he delights in sense-pleasures. But he becomes a yogi when he chooses to refrain from the activities of the senses. His preparation for identification with the Paramatman is in direct proportion to the control of the senses that he exercises.

The relationship between the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman is analogous to the relationship between the *ākāsa* in a pot and the *ākāsa* outside. These two *ākāsās* are designated the *Ghaṭa ākāsa* and *Mahā ākāsa* respectively. The former *ākāsa* has a seeming individuality when the pot is in existence. But actually the *Mahā ākāsa* alone is irrespective of the existence or otherwise of the pot. Even so, the Paramatman alone is the eternal verity putting on now and then the appearance of the *Jivatman*.

Because of his identification with the Prakriti, the *Jivatman* is termed *Kartā*–the agent and *Bhogin* – the one who enjoys. When these limiting adjuncts are eliminated, the Atman is in his original state. As the *Jivatman* he seems to be a part of the Paramatman. When the *Jīvāhood* goes, he is one with the Paramatman.

यतन्तः *yatantaḥ* striving योगिनः *yoginaḥ* the yogins च *ca* and एनम् *enaṁ* this पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* see आत्मनि *ātmani* in the self अवस्थितम् *avasthitaṁ* dwelling यतन्तः *yatantaḥ* striving अपि *api* also अकृत आत्मानः *akṛta ātmānaḥ* the unrefined न *na* not एनम् *enaṁ* this पश्यन्ति *paśyanti* see अचेतसः *acetasaḥ* the unintelligent

**Those who strive, endued with yoga, cognize him dwelling in the self; though striving, the unrefined and unintelligent see him not. 11**

The act of striving is common both to the yogi and the non-yogi. Nothing can be achieved without working for it. But the unrefined and unintelligent man labours the wrong way. He is not well established in self-control. Spiritual egoism lurks in his heart. Pride and conceit alienate him from others. Such a man, though endeavouring in the spiritual line all through life, does not develop the eye of wisdom. But the yogi is engaged in all humility in the welfare of all. He does his earthly duties to perfection viewing them as service to the Lord. He is exemplary in his practice of austerity and self-control. And in subordinating the individual will to the Will of the Lord he is unreserved. Purity of the mind marks him for its own. He therefore develops the eye of wisdom as a matter of course.

All water leaks away even if there be a minute hole in a water pot. In that manner, even if there be a trace of earthly attachment in the mind of a *Sadhaka*, all his spiritual practices come to naught.

— Sri Ramakrishna

he behaves like a magician with his equipment. Somewhere he spreads out his few things and shows his magic performance. Then he bundles up his belongings and goes to another place intent on the same show. Similarly, the *Jivatman* spreads out his senses, mind and his *upādhis* when he takes birth in one place. He withdraws them at death, only to project them again in another birth.

What does the *Jivatman* do with his senses? His action is explained :—

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥ ९

श्रोत्रम् चक्षुः स्पर्शनम् च रसनम् घ्राणम् एव च ।
अधि-स्था-य मनः च अयम् विषयान् उप-सेवते ॥

*śrotraṁ cakṣuḥ sparśanam ca rasanaṁ ghrāṇaṁ eva ca*
*adhiṣṭhāya manaś cā 'yaṁ viṣayān upasevate* ||

श्रोत्रम् *śrotraṁ* the ear चक्षुः *cakṣuḥ* the eye स्पर्शनम् *sparśanam* the (organ of) touch च *ca* and रसनम् *rasanam* the (organ of) taste घ्राणम् *ghrāṇaṁ* the (organ of) smell एव *eva* even च *ca* and अधिष्ठाय *adhiṣṭhāya* presiding over मनः *manaḥ* the mind च *ca* and अयम् *ayaṁ* he विषयान् *viṣayān* objects of the senses उपसेवते *upasevate* enjoys

**Presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, as also the mind, he experiences objects. 9**

All the five senses serve as five different messengers to the indweller in the body. If a man be shut up in a cell with no outlet whatsoever he would perish deprived of air, water, food and light.

ness of the Atman. The how of it is as follows: There are two rooms lit by the sun. One of them happens to be vacant; there is none to cognize the existence of the sunlight in it. The feeling 'I am' is not in that light as well. The existence or the non- existence of the sunlight in that room makes no difference. There is the sunlight in the next room as well. In addition to it, a man is present in that room. He witnesses his own existence and the existence of the sunlight in that room. The insentient light that comes from the sun, the moon and the fire is cognized by the Sentient Light or the Cosmic Consciousness which is Iswara. The Light known as the Intelligence of the Knower reveals the existence of the object known. The sun, the moon and the fire are all objects known and revealed by Atman, the Knower.

Further, the *ātma chaitanya* is the Life of lives. The how of it is as follows :—

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १३

गाम् आ-विश्·य च भूतानि धारयामि अहम् ओजसा ।
पुष्णामि च ओषधीः सर्वाः सोमः भू-त्वा रस-आत्म(न्)-कः ॥

*gām āviśya ca bhūtāni dhārayāmy aham ojasā* ।
*puṣṇāmi cau 'ṣadhīḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ* ॥

गाम् *gāṁ* the earth आविश्य *āviśya* permeating च *ca* and भूतानि *bhūtāni* all beings धारयामि *dhārayāmi* (I) support अहम् *ahaṁ* I ओजसा *ojasā* by (my) energy पुष्णामि *puṣṇāmi* (I) nourish च *ca* and ओषधीः *oṣadhīḥ* the

They are designated as the deluded – *Vimūḍhāḥ*, because of their ignorance in regard to the Self, the foremost factor in themselves. Not knowing their own supreme worth and the profound possibilities in their existence, they merely give themselves over to the functioning of the senses which only aid their good and bad contact with the perishable objects outside. Limited and defective as the senses are, they are incapable of cognizing and contacting the self who stays in the body, enjoys the objects presented and departs from the body when it becomes unfit for occupation. Cognition of the Self alone is real cognition. And that is possible to only those who have the intuitive faculty or the eye of wisdom.

The human beings are all like pillows varying in their external appearances. One is red, another blue and a third yellow or black. But the stuff inside all of them is the same silk-cotton. Similarly some men are fair in colour while others are ugly, some are good tempered and others are bad tempered. Still the same Iswara resides in the hearts of all of them.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How to obtain the eye of wisdom? The process is explained :—

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ ११

यतन्तः योगिनः च एनम् पश्यन्ति आत्मनि अवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तः अपि अ-कृत-आत्मानः न एनम् पश्यन्ति अ-चेतसः ॥

*yatanto yoginas cai 'naṁ pasyanty ātmany avasthitam*
*yatanto 'py akṛtātmāno nai 'naṁ paśyanty acetasaḥ* ॥

*ahaṁ vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṁ deham āśritaḥ* ।
*prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ pacāmy annaṁ caturvidham* ॥

अहम् *ahaṁ* I वैश्वानरः *vaiśvānaraḥ* (the fire) Vaisvanara भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having become प्राणिनाम् *prāṇināṁ* of living beings देहम् *dehaṁ* the body आश्रितः *āśritaḥ* abiding प्राण अपान समायुक्तः *prāṇa apāna samāyuktaḥ* associated with Prana and Apana पचामि *pacāmi* (I) digest अन्नम् *annaṁ* food चतुर्विधम् *catur vidhaṁ* fourfold

**Abiding in the body of living beings as Vaisvanara, associated with Prana and Apana, I digest the four kinds of food. 14**

That energy is known as *Vaisvānara* which remains in the bodies of beings as warmth and aids the digestion of food. This energy is also known as *Jatarāgni*, the gastric fire. It is tended by the breathing that is going on incessantly. Food is partaken of in four different ways—masticating, sucking, licking and swallowing—basing on the nature and form of food. Excluding the *ākasā*, the other four elements, earth, water, fire and air constitute the food in four different ways.

There are the other benign ways in which the Lord is present in beings. They are recounted :—

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥ १५

सर्वस्य च अहम् हृदि सम्-नि-विश्-तः मद्-तः स्मृ-तिः ज्ञानम् अप-ऊहनम् च ।
वेदैः च सर्वैः अहम् एव वेद्यः वेदान्त-कृत् वेद-विद् एव च अहम् ॥

*sarvasya cā 'haṁ hṛdi saṁniviṣṭo*
*mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanaṁ ca* ।

What is it that the intuitive knowers of Paramatman behold? The answer comes:—

**The Immanence of the Paramatman — 12-15**

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥ १२

यत् आदित्य-गतम् तेज जगत् भासयते अखिलम् ।
यत् चन्द्रमसि यत् च अग्नौ तत् तेज. विद्धि मामकम् ॥

*yad ādityagatam tejo jagad bhāsayate 'khilam* ।
*yac candramasi yac cā 'gnau tat tejo viddhi māmakam*

यत् *yat* which आदित्यगतम् *āditya gataṁ* residing in the sun तेजः *tejaḥ* light जगत् *jagat* the world भासयते *bhāsayate* illumines अखिलम् *akhilaṁ* whole यत् *yat* which चन्द्रमसि *candramasi* in the moon यत् *yat* which च *ca* and अग्नौ *agnau* in the fire तत् *tat* that तेजः *tejaḥ* light विद्धि *viddhi* know मामकम् *māmakaṁ* mine

**The light which residing in the sun illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire—know that light to be Mine. 12**

The existence of a thing can be seen with the aid of light. The lights known to us come from the sun, the moon and the fire. And this light is the outcome of *Sattva*. As a mirror reflects the face, the *Sattva Guna* reflects Consciousness which is Atman. This *Sattva* comes from the Paramatman. As the sunlight reveals the insentient substance, *ātma chaitanya* reveals awareness such as 'I am.' What the sun gives is merely the insentient light; whereas what is in the Atman is sentient light or sentience to be more precise. The insentient light has no existence independent of the Light or Aware-

nent His permanency is posited. His omniscience is evinced everywhere in Nature by things sentient and insentient. *Anandam Brahman*—that He is Bliss, is testified by the entire Nature. His omnipotence is also attested by the Cosmos. Beauty is all His, is borne testimony to by anything and everything in the universe. To know all these verities is to know the Vedas. Iswara is the knower of the Vedas. But He does not exhaust Himself in the manifest universe. A speck in Him has become all these. The truth of His being infinitely beyond Nature is Vedanta.

The Paramatman in all His forms is being explained now:—

**The Facets of Brahman — 16-20**

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ १६

द्वौ इमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरः च अ-क्षरः एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूट-स्थः अ-क्षरः उच्यते ॥

*dvāv imau puruṣau loke kṣaraś cā 'kṣara eva ca |*
*kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho 'kṣara ucyate ||*

द्वौ *dvau* two इमौ *imau* these पुरुषौ *puruṣau* (two) Purushas लोके *loke* in the world क्षरः *kṣaraḥ* the perishable च *ca* and अक्षरः *akṣaraḥ* the imperishable एव *eva* even च *ca* and क्षरः *kṣaraḥ* the perishable सर्वाणि *sarvāṇi* all भूतानि *bhūtāni* beings कूटस्थः *kūṭasthaḥ* the immutable अक्षरः *akṣaraḥ* the imperishable उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**There are two Purushas in the world – the Perishable and the Imperishable. All beings are the Perishable, and the Kutastha is called the Imperishable.**

herbs सर्वाः *sarvāh* all सोम *somah* moon भूत्वा *bhūtvā* having become रसात्मक *rasātmakah* watery

**Entering the earth I support all beings by My energy; and having become the sapid moon I nourish all herbs. 13**

It is evident all over Nature that one form of energy transforms itself into another Modern science takes advantage of this fact and turns the resources of nature to man's advantage On a close investigation it is found that no demarcation can be made between matters organic and inorganic, between forms of energy sentient and insentient Life on earth, for instance, thrives by converting light and heat of the sun into sentient energy

The manifest energy in its original form, as it emanates from Iswara, is known as *Ojas* It pervades the entire universe and holds it intact The movable and the immovable do all get their sustenance from it The life energy comes in one form from the sun and in quite another form from the moon The sapidity of the vegetable kingdom on earth is obtained from the moon While being converted into suitable forms, all energy in fact comes from the Paramatman

The third stage of the life energy that comes from Iswara is next explained —

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४

अहम् वैश्वानर भू-त्वा प्र-अनिनाम् देहम् आ श्रित. ।
प्राण अपान-सम् आ-युज्-त पच् आमि अन्नम् चतुर्-विधम् ॥

उत्तम: *uttamaḥ* the supreme पुरुष: *puruṣaḥ* Purusha तु *tu* but अन्य: *anyaḥ* another परमात्मा *paramātmā* the Highest Self इति *iti* thus उदाहृत: *udāhṛtaḥ* called य: *yaḥ* who लोकत्रयम् *loka trayaṁ* the three worlds आविश्य *āviśya* pervading बिभर्ति *bibharti* sustains अव्यय: *avyayaḥ* the indestructible ईश्वर: *īśvaraḥ* Lord

**But distinct is the Supreme Purusha called the Highest Self, the indestructible Lord, who pervades and sustains the three worlds. 17**

Iswara is also called *Saguna Brahman.* He is the Lord of *Māyā*. The *Jivatmans* and the *Jagat* are His attributes. Whatever glory, whatever divine manifestations, whatever arresting attributes we are able to cognize with our purified intellect—all these sublimities belong to Iswara. Purushottama is He who is beyond even these celestial grandeurs. Modifications find no place in Him. He is the *Nirguna Brahman. Prajñānam,* Contentless Consciousness, Pure Consciousness, Awareness–these are some of the epithets by which He is indicated. He is Indeterminate but Intense Consciousness. Limitations such as time, space and causation gain no access to Him. Mahanarayana, Sadasiva, Parasakti—these are some of the theological names attributed to Him.

How does Brahman stay in the human body? He is like the piston in a syringe. While being in the body, He remains untouched and unaffected by it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ १८

*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo*
*vedāntakṛd vedavid eva cā 'ham* ||

सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all च *ca* and अहम् *aham* I हृदि *hṛdi* in the heart संनिविष्ट: *samniviṣtaḥ* seated मत्त: *mattaḥ* from me स्मृति: *smṛtiḥ* memory ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge अपोहनम् *apohanam* (their) absence च *ca* and वेदै: *vedaiḥ* by the Vedas च *ca* and सर्वै: *sarvaiḥ* (by) all अहम् *aham* I एव *eva* even वेद्य: *vedyaḥ* to be known वेदान्तकृत् *vedānta kṛt* the author of the Vedanta वेदवित् *vedavit* the knower of Veda एव *eva* even च *ca* and अहम् *aham* I

**And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge, as well as their loss; I am verily that which has to be known by all the Vedas; I am indeed the author of the Vedanta as well as the knower of the Vedas. 15**

The Lord resides as consciousness in the hearts of all. Memory of what has been done before is possible because of this consciousness. Knowledge or the faculty of understanding as to how to react to the changing circumstances — this power also comes from consciousness. As the unwanted old records are destroyed, the purposeless retention in memory and the aimless fostering of unwanted knowledge— these are all done away with because of the proximity of consciousness.

The various cosmic functions and the knowledge pertaining to them put together, are called the Vedas. It is the Paramatman revealing himself as Nature. Everything in Nature is in its own way expressing the glory of Iswara. Through the things imperma-

*yo māṁ evaṁ asaṁmūḍho jānāti puruṣottamam* ।
*sa sarvavid bhajati māṁ sarva bhāvena bhārata* ॥

सः *yaḥ* who माम् *māṁ* me एवम् *evaṁ* thus असंमूढः *asaṁmūḍhaḥ* undeluded जानाति *jānāti* knows पुरुषोत्तमम् *puruṣottamaṁ* the Supreme Purusha सः *saḥ* he सर्ववित् *sarvavit* all-knowing भजति *bhajati* worships माम् *māṁ* me सर्वभावेन *sarva bhāvena* with his whole being भारत O Bharata

**He who, undeluded, knows Me as the Highest Self — he knows all, O Bharata, and he worships Me with all his heart.** **19**

There is only one Reality. The deluded one sees plurality and not unity. Plurality is necessarily the spectacle of the phenomenal universe, constituted of the sentient and the insentient. As a *sadhaka* advances in spiritual discipline he realizes divinity permeating the entire universe of plurality. Because of this benign vision his attitude towards the world gets divinized. His devotion to the Maker is then on the increase. That Iswara is the owner and supporter of everything, becomes evident subsequently. The best thing that the *Jivatman* can do is to develop all his faculties not for self-aggrandizement, but for the service of the Lord. That the *Jivatman* and the *Jagat* are all part and parcel of Iswara, is next realized. The self-importance to which man is habitually addicted is shorn of its poignancy. With or without the multitudes participating in the Lord's grand sport of the creation, the preservation and the destruction, His sport goes on in perfect symphony. The blessed privilege of the *Jivatman* is to be a dedic-

The *Jivatman* is the individualized consciousness. Since there is a beginning and an end to the process of individualization, he is classified as *Kshara* or the Perishable. The *Jivatman* being an *Upādhi* or limiting adjunct to Iswara, the *Upādhi* is also called the Purusha. The *Jagat* or the insentient universe is also an *Upādhi* to Iswara. But there is a fundamental difference between the *Jīvās* being associated with the Prakriti or *Māyā* and Iswara doing the same. The *Jīvās* are all slaves to *Māyā* while Iswara is eternally the Lord of it. Wielding power over *Māyā*, He assumes various forms as if in sport. He is therefore called the *Kūṭastha*. Facets of this Iswara assume theological names such as Siva, Narayana and Bhagavati. From the Vedic times up till now, this Cosmic Purusha has undergone changes of names, forms and attributes according to the attitudes and attainments of the worshippers. The same Purusha provides scope for His being adored in a variety of ways by the different religionists.

The skin, the pulp, the nut and everything else in a fruit have all come from the same seed. Similarly, the sentient, the insentient and all forms of existence have come from the same Iswara —Sri Ramakrishna

The Paramatman is being portrayed :—

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ १७

उत्तमः पुरुषः तु अन्यः परम-आत्मा इति उद्-आ-हृतः ।
यः लोक-त्रयम् आ-विश्-य बिभर्ति अ-व्ययः ईश्वरः ॥

*uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyaḥ paramātme 'ty udāhṛtaḥ ।*
*yo lokatrayam āviśya bibharty avyaya īśvaraḥ ॥*

**Thus, O sinless one, has this most profound teaching been imparted by Me. Knowing this a man becomes enlightened, O Bharata, and all his duties are accomplished. 20**

Though the whole of the Bhagavad Gita is a profound teaching, this chapter in particular is pronounced as profound, because of the quintessence of Vedanta being enshrined in it. He who has realized Brahman is the *Jnāni.* All his duties and obligations terminate in the realization of Brahman. And there is no duty superior to the enlightenment in Brahman. There is no ideal superior to *Brahmavidyā.* There is no attainment superior to that of Brahman. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman; and that is *Mukti.*

The human birth is rare to obtain. After having obtained it, if man does not aspire for the realization of Iswara, he is born in vain.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम
पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde puruṣottama yogo nāma pañcadaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fifteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE SUPREME SELF

यस्मात् क्षरम् अति-इत अहम् अ क्षरात् अपि च उत्तम ।
अत अस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथित पुरुष उत्तम ॥

*yasmāt ksaram atito 'ham aksarād apı co'ttamaḥ* ।
*ato 'smı loke vede ca prathıtaḥ puruṣottamaḥ* ॥

यस्मात् *yasmāt* as क्षरम् *kṣaram* the perishable अतीत *atıtaḥ* transcend अहम् *aham* I अक्षरात् *aksarāt* than the imperishable अपि *apı* also च *ca* and उत्तम *uttamaḥ* best अत *ataḥ* therefore अस्मि *asmı* (I) am लोके *loke* in the world वेदे *vede* in the Veda च *ca* and प्रथित *prathıtaḥ* declared पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottamaḥ* the Highest Purusha

**As I transcend the Perishable and am even above the Imperishable, therefore am I known in the world and in the Veda as 'Purushottama,' the Highest Purusha. 18**

*Kshara* is that which is perishable The Prakriti is perishable and it is compared with the peepul tree in the beginning of this chapter The *Jıvāhood* of the *Jıvā* is also perishable while the Pure Consciousness in him is none other than the Imperishable Brahman, who is simultaneously with attributes and beyond attributes The enlightened ones have extolled Him to the best of their understanding For, the only thing that is knowable to them is He

What becomes of the *Jıvatman* who realizes the Paramatman? The pronouncement comes —

यो मामेवमसंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥ १९

य माम् एवम् अ-सम्-मूढ जा(ज्ञा) नाति पुरुष-उत्तमम् ।
स सर्व विद् भज्-अति माम् सर्व-भावेन भारत ॥

Fear in all of its forms resolves itself into the fear of being hurt or killed. It is based on the ignorance that one is the body and not the Atman. The one given to fear is good for nothing. But all merits are born of fearlessness. The symbolic pose of *abhaya* or fearlessness is characteristic of all the Deities that represent Iswara. The idea is that Godhood and fear are incompatible. As a *sadhaka* draws near God, he rids himself of all fears.

One is said to be established in the purity of heart when one makes no difference whatsoever between the welfare of oneself and the welfare of others.

He who is able to distinguish between the things that are lasting and those that are evanescent, is gifted with *jnāna* or knowledge. It is yoga when one seeks that which is permanent and shuns that which is impermanent. Great is the result when there is steadfastness in the pursuit of both knowledge and yoga.

Benefaction extended on right lines is almsgiving. The heart expands when one shares the things good and useful with deserving people. Genuine gifts are those which are offered with love, kindness and humility.

The senses are prone to indulgence thereby causing harm to the enjoyer. They are the gateways to hell when they run riot. Curbing them is the first step in the path of discipline. Mastery over the senses brings in its train all blessings leading to the Divine.

ated instrument in the hands of the Lord and thus terminate the delusion of his individualized existence. The goal in life of the *Jivatman* is to make himself over to the Paramatman The Prakriti aspect in him is surrendered to Iswara or the *Saguna Brahman*. The Purusha aspect in him merges in *Nirguna Brahman* in the manner in which the space in a pot merges in the cosmic space when the pot is broken.

When the steamer on the Ganges touches the sea, it sails to the yonder regions, unknown to people this side. Even so, when the *Jivatman* merges in Brahman, he does not return to the relative existence

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

What is the benefit that the *sadhaka* derives in being tuned in *Brahmāvastha*? The treat is delineated :—

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयाऽनघ ।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥ २०

इति गुह्य-तमम् शास्त्रम् इदम् उक्तं मया अन्-अघ ।
एतत् बुध्-त्वा बुद्धिमान् (अ)स्यात् कृत-कृत्यः च भारत ॥

*iti guhyatamaṁ śāstram idam uktam mayā 'nagha* ।
*etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt kṛtakṛtyaś ca bhārata* ॥

इति *iti* thus गुह्यतमम् *guhya tamam* most secret शास्त्रम् *śāstraṁ* science इदम् *idam* this उक्तम् *uktam* has been taught मया *mayā* by me अनघ *anagha* O sinless one एतत् *etat* this बुद्ध्वा *buddhvā* knowing बुद्धिमान् *buddhimān* wise स्यात् *syāt* becomes कृतकृत्यः *kṛta kṛtyaḥ* (who has) accomplished all the duties च *ca* and भारत *bharata* O Bharata

*bhūteṣu* to beings अलोलुप्त्वम् *aloluptvaṁ* uncovetousness मार्दवम् *mārdavaṁ* gentleness ह्रीः *hrīḥ* modesty अचापलम् *acāpalaṁ* absence of fickleness

**Non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness. 2**

All lives at all levels are the manifestations of the one Cosmic Life – the Lord. Recognizing sacredness in them and not choosing to hurt them for sport, is non-injury — *ahimsa.*

God is truth and the phenomenon a mere appearance. Directing one's mind, speech and action to postulating and glorifying God is truth. Whatever is done, said or countenanced to esteem earthly life is the negation of truth or *satyam.*

Anger makes its appearance in one when one feels that others do not come up to one's expectations. In other words, when one's desires are obstructed, one rises in anger. But when one remains unaffected by the behaviour of others, one does not fall a victim to anger – this is *akrodhaḥ.*

All things sentient and insentient belong to Iswara and not to man. To be fixed in this fundamental is renunciation – *tyāgaḥ.*

Every time mind gets disturbed it loses its stamina. But as it gains in poise and equilibrium it is progressing towards serenity – *sānti.*

Calumny is disrespect for others and misrepresenting them on flimsy or false grounds; it is born of

# दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगः

## DAIVASURA SAMPAD VIBHAGA YOGA—THE YOGA OF DIVISION BETWEEN THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIACAL

## CHAPTER XVI

The Divine Traits — The Demoniac Traits—The Effects of the Two Traits—The Demoniacal Ways – The Fall of the Asuras — Liberation from the Asura Fetters – Scripture is the Guide

### The Divine Traits — 1-3

श्री भगवानुवाच

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ १

अ-भयम् सद्-त्व-सम्-शुद्धि ज्ञान-योग-वि-अव-स्थितिः ।
दानम् दमः च यज्ञः च स्वाध्यायः तपः आर्जवम् ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*abhayam sattvasamśuddhir jñānayoga vyavasthitiḥ ।*
*dānam damaś ca yajñaś ca svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam ॥*

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

अभयम् *abhayam* fearlessness सत्त्वसशुद्धिः *sattva samśuddhiḥ* purity of heart ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः *jñāna yoga vyavasthitiḥ* steadfastness in knowledge and yoga दानम् *dānam* almsgiving दमः *damaḥ* control of the senses च *ca* and यज्ञः *yajñaḥ* sacrifice च *ca* and स्वाध्यायः *svādhyāyaḥ* study of Sastras तपः *tapaḥ* austerity आर्जवम् *ārjavam* straightforwardness

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and yoga, almsgiving, control of the senses, Yajna, study of the scriptures, austerity and straightforwardness. 1**

दैवीम् *daivīm* divine अभिजातस्य *abhijātasya* of the born भारत *bhārata* O Bharata

**Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride, these belong to one born for a divine state, O Bharata. 3**

To be imbued with *tejas* or vigour is a divine quality. This energy is always utilized for putting down evil and for upholding virtue.

*Kshamā* means forgiveness. It is the ornament of a hero who has the capacity and the opportunity to avenge the wrongs done to him, but who does not exercise his power for self-assertion. Instead, he aims at self-effacement by forgiving the offender and forgetting the wrong.

*Dhṛtiḥ* means fortitude. It is an attitude of mind which serves both as a tonic to and antidote against the weariness of, the body and mind. It wards off slackness.

*Saucham* means purity both within and without. External cleanliness is easy of observance. But keeping the mind clean is more important. When the mind is pure, speech and action become naturally wholesome.

In the process of the evolution of beings hatred has its part to play; and so it gets ingrained in them. But it is a blemish in a highly evolved state. Therefore it has to be erased from the mind. *Adroha* means absence of hatred.

The natural tendency of man is to appear important in the eyes of others. His self-assumed impor-

*Yajna* means sacrifice. Any act that brings the maximum public good and that cures the performer of his selfishness, is *Yajna*. It need not necessarily be a traditional ritual associated with the sacrificial fire, the priest and the oblation. Self-effacement, glorifying God and the benefaction to people—these are the marks of a well performed *Yajna*.

The study of the scriptures is the prerogative of man. The seers, sages and saints have left them as an invaluable legacy. It is open to man to pursue those sacred books devotedly and critically too if he is so inclined. This study is the healthiest of all. It rids man of superstition and guides him Godward.

It is possible for man to recast his mind, to improve upon his mode of life and to give himself over to spirituality. When all these acts are undertaken deliberately, it is austerity—*tapas*.

Straightforwardness is just the opposite of crookedness. It is the act of harmonizing the thought, word and deed on noble purposes frankly and openly.

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ २

अ-हिंसा सत्यम् अ-क्रोधः त्यागः शान्तिः अ-पैशुनम् ।
दया भूतेषु अलोलुप्त्वम् मार्दवम् ह्रीः अ-चापलम् ॥

*ahimsā satyam akrodhas tyāgaḥ śāntir apaiśunam* ।
*dayā bhūtesv aloluptvam mārdavam hrīr acāpalam* ॥

अहिंसा *ahimsā* harmlessness सत्यम् *satyam* truth अक्रोधः *akrodhaḥ* absence of anger त्यागः *tyāgaḥ* renunciation शान्तिः *śāntiḥ* peacefulness अपैशुनम् *apaiśunam* absence of crookedness दया *dayā* compassion भूतेषु

harshness by caricaturing a weak man as strong, a blind man as having beautiful eyes and a poor man as rich. He evinces ignorance by holding unrighteousness as righteousness.

Rice cakes have their exterior coating made of rice flour. But their inner contents are of different edibles. Similarly in extérnal appearance all are human beings. But in their mental make up they vary from the divine to the devilish.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the outcome of the variation in temperaments? The answer comes:—

### The Effects of the Two Traits — 5-6

दैवी संपद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।
मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥ ५

दैवी सम्-पद् वि-मोक्षाय नि-बन्धाय आसुरी म(न्)ता ।
मा शुचः सम्-पदम् दैवीम् अभि-(जन्) जा-तः अ(स्)सि पाण्डव ॥

*daivī sampad vimokṣāya nibandhāyā 'surī matā* ।
*mā śucāḥ sampadam daivīm abhijāto 'si pāṇḍava* ॥

दैवी *daivī* divine सम्पत् *sampat* state विमोक्षाय *vimokṣāya* for liberation निबन्धाय *nibandhāya* for bondage आसुरी *āsurī* the demoniacal मता *matā* is deemed मा *mā* not शुचः *śucaḥ* grieve सम्पदम् *sampadam* state दैवीम् *daivīm* the divine अभिजातः *abhijātaḥ* born for असि *asi* (thou) art पाण्डव *pāṇḍava* O Pandavá

**The divine nature is deemed for liberation, the demoniacal for bondage; grieve not, O Pandava, you are born for a divine state. 5**

The tendencies acquired by a soul during a lifetime do not get lost with it. They are carried in a potential form for further development in births

a low mentality But a *sadhaka* imbued with divine traits is genuinely free from calumny – *apaisunam.*

When the sight of other beings in distress draws out sympathy and fellow feeling, it is a mark of compassion to being – *bhūtesu dayā.*

No thought of appropriating the properties of others should rise in the mind of one at whose disposal they happen to be placed That individual is then said to be established in uncovetousness – *aloluptvam*

*Mārdavam* means gentleness. It is found in those who are refined in character

Praise tickles the vanity of an ordinary man. But a cultured person feels bashful when praised. It is the sign of modesty – *hrīḥ.*

Shaking the body and the limbs unnecessarily and fidgetting on flimsy grounds are the symptoms of crudity. *Achāpalam* or the absence of fickleness is seen in one endowed with a divine element.

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३

तेजः क्षमा धृ-ति शौचम् अ-द्रोह न अति-मानिता ।
भव्-अन्ति सम्-पदम् दैवीम् अभि-जातस्य भारत ॥

*tejaḥ ksamā dhṛtih śaucam adroho nā 'timānitā* ।
*bhavanti sampadam daivīm abhijātasya bhārata* ॥

तेज *tejaḥ* vigour क्षमा *ksamā* forgiveness धृति *dhṛtiḥ* fortitude शौचम् *śaucam* purity अद्रोह *adrohah* absence of hatred न *na* not अतिमानिता *atimānitā* too much of pride भवन्ति *bhavanti* belong सम्पदम् *sampadam* state

Beings mobile and immobile all possess countless characteristics. But they may be all easily brought under two broad types — the divine and the demoniacal. The former is pleasing and the latter disquieting. The one aids evolution and the other retards it. The divine elements have already been elaborated upon; the Asura elements yet remain to be explained. Negative ideas and ideals which are detrimental to the spiritual growth of man, find no place in a dissertation like the Bhagavad Gita. Still, when the potential harm in them is pointed out, the *sadhaka* is able to guard himself against those evils. For this reason the Lord dilates on them to the extent necessary.

**The Demoniacal Ways — 7-18**

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥ ७

प्र-वृत्तिम् च नि-वृत्तिम् च जनाः न विदुः आसुराः ।
न शौचम् न अपि च आ-चारः न सत्यम् तेषु विद्-य-ते ॥

*pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca janā na vidur āsurāḥ* ।
*na śaucaṁ nā 'pi cā 'cāro na satyaṁ teṣu vidyate* ॥

प्रवृत्तिम् *pravṛttiṁ* action च *ca* and निवृत्तिम् *nivṛttiṁ* inaction च *ca* and जनाः *janāḥ* men न *na* not विदुः *viduḥ* know आसुराः *āsurāḥ* the demoniac न *na* not शौचम् *śaucaṁ* purity न *na* not अपि *api* also च *ca* and आचारः *ācāraḥ* right conduct न *na* not सत्यम् *satyaṁ* truth तेषु *teṣu* in them विद्यते *vidyate* is

**The demoniac know not what to do and what to refrain from; neither purity, nor right conduct nor truth is found in them.** **7**

tance expresses itself as pride - *atimānitā* But a true inquiry into the glory of God compels man to relinquish pride as a disease of the mind

All the virtues enumerated in the above three stanzas bring man's divine nature into relief The demoniacal nature which is the opposite is next delineated —

The Demoniac Traits — 4

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥ ४

दम्भ दर्प अभि-मान च क्रोध पारुष्यम् एव च ।
अ-ज्ञानम् च अभि-जातस्य पार्थ सम्-पदम् आसुरीम् ॥

*dambho darpo 'bhimānaś ca krodhaḥ pāruṣyam eva ca* |
*ajñānam cā 'bhijātasya pārtha sampadam āsurīm* ||

दम्भ *dambhah* hypocrisy दर्प *darpaḥ* arrogance अभिमान *abhimānaḥ* self-conceit च *ca* and क्रोध *krodhaḥ* wrath पारुष्यम् *pāruṣyam* harshness एव *eva* even च *ca* and अज्ञानम् *ajñānam* ignorance च *ca* and अभिजातस्य *abhijātasya* of the born पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सम्पदम् *sampadam* state आसुरीम् *āsurīm* demoniacal

**Ostentation, arrogance and self-conceit, anger and also harshness and ignorance belong to one who is born, O Partha, for a demoniac state. 4**

Putting up a show of good behaviour and donning oneself in pompous garments is ostentation. Presuming oneself as superior to others is arrogance. Priding oneself on being educated, moneyed and high-born is conceit As a dog greets another strange dog with a snarl, the demoniac man asserts his individuality with anger He exhibits his

**They say, "the universe is unreal, without a moral basis, without a God, born of mutual union, brought about by lust; what else?"** 8

Truth, dharma and God are the different expressions of the Reality which governs the universe. The knowers, the believers, the moralists and the theists are those who live in tune with God's Law. The infidels, the profligates, the atheists and the nihilists are those who deny or defy the Law. Whatever is, is the outcome of lust and it may therefore be lustfully indulged in — is the creed of this type of people.

A worldling can easily be known from the way in which he dislikes matters religious. He objects to the chanting of the name of the Lord and to listening to the singing of His glory. He prevents the others from taking to the path of religion. Religious institutions are condemned by him. He openly ridicules the holy men and the holy orders. Such behaviour is the mark of the man steeped in worldliness.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What kind of life do the men of this creed live? The answer comes :—

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥ ९

एताम् दृष्टिम् अव-स्तभ्य नष्-त-आत्मानः अल्प-बुद्धयः ।
प्र-भवन्ति उग्र-कर्माणः क्षयाय जगतः अ-हिताः ॥

*etāṁ dṛṣṭim avaṣṭabhya naṣṭātmāno 'lpabuddhayaḥ* ।
*prabhavanty ugrakarmāṇaḥ kṣayāya jagato 'hitāḥ* ॥

एताम् *etāṁ* this दृष्टिम् *dṛṣṭiṁ* view अवष्टभ्य *avaṣṭabhya* holding नष्टात्मानः *naṣṭātmānaḥ* ruined souls अल्पबुद्धयः *alpa buddhayaḥ* of small intellect प्रभवन्ति *prabhavanti*

yet to come The divine traits assimilated in successive transmigrations contribute for liberation from *Samsāra* or the trail of births and deaths The demoniac traits on the other hand forge the bondage of phenomenal existence and perpetuate the cycle of births and deaths There is a possibility of Arjuna's doubting about the state into which he is born. The Lord who is the knower of the past, present and future of the *Jivatman* allays this doubt, by assuring him of his divine state and of his being quite fit for emancipation

What are the classifications of the *Jivatmans* and how are they made? The answer comes:—

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च ।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥ ६

द्वौ भू-त-सर्गौ लोके अस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च ।
दैव वि स्तर-श प्र-उक्त आसुरम् पार्थ मे शृणु ॥

*dvau bhūtasargau loke 'smin daiva āsura eva ca* ।
*daivo vistaraśah prokta āsuram pārtha me śrnu* ॥

द्वौ *dvau* two भूतसर्गौ *bhūta sargau* types of beings लोके *loke* in world अस्मिन् *asmin* (in) this दैवः *daivah* the divine आसुर *āsura* demoniacal एव *eva* even च *ca* and दैव *daivah* the divine विस्तरशः *vistaraśah* at length प्रोक्त *proktah* has been described आसुरम् *āsuram* demoniacal पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha मे *me* from me शृणु *śrnu* hear

**There are two types of beings in this world, the divine and the demoniacal; the divine has been described at length; hear from Me, O Partha, of the demoniacal. 6**

**Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they work with impure resolve; 10**

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥ ११

चिन्ताम् अ-परि-मेयाम् च प्र-लय-अन्ताम् उप-आ-श्रि-ताः ।
काम-उप-भोग-परमाः एतावत् इति निस्-चि-ताः ॥

*cintām aparimeyāṁ ca pralayāntām upāśritāḥ* ।
*kāmopabhogaparamā etāvad iti niścitāḥ* ॥

चिन्ताम् *cintāṁ* cares अपरिमेयाम् *aparimeyāṁ* unmeasurable च *ca* and प्रलयान्ताम् *pralayāntāṁ* ending only with death उपाश्रिताः *upāśritāḥ* refuged in काम उपभोगपरमाः *kāma upa bhoga paramāḥ* regarding gratification of lust as their highest aim एतावत् *etāvat* that is all इति *iti* thus निश्चिताः *niścitāḥ* feeling sure

**Beset with immense cares ending only with death, regarding gratification of lust as the highest, and feeling sure that that is all; 11**

Their base and boisterous passions seem to the others to have come to an end with death. But actually those passions get buried in their inner core, only to remanifest themselves in the next birth. Tendencies become latent at death as they do in sleep.

The earth-bound people do not learn a lesson even when overcome with acute pain, disappointments, failures and misfortunes in life. They are like the camels which go on biting off thorny shrubs unmindful of the bleeding caused to their lips.

A dearly loved wife dies or deserts; the man forgets all about it and remarries. The sudden passing away of a beloved child brings in desolation. But in a few days he brushes it aside and gets absorbed in life. The mother weeps and wails over the

Commendable acts are those which are conducive to the general welfare of man. They are designated as dharma. Prohibited acts are those which deprave man and ruin his career. They are condemned as *adharma*. The good always conform to dharma. Animals are not altogether ignorant of dharma and *adharma*. Instinctively they understand what to do and what to refrain from. But men of the Asura type are devoid of discrimination in this respect. Impure thoughts alone sprout in their minds. Their physical habits and doings are anything but clean. Utterances coming out from them are distorted, diabolical and devoid of truth. Pollution of the entire personality is what is found in them.

If the demoniac be asked as to why they behave malignantly, the justification they make betrays their disposition.

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।
अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥ ८

अ-सत्यम् अ-प्रति-स्थम् ते जगत् आहु अन्-ईश्वरम् ।
अ-परस्पर-सम्-भूतम् किम् अन्यत् काम-हैतुकम् ॥

*asatyam apratiṣtham te jagad āhur anīśvaram* ।
*aparasparasambhūtam kim anyat kāmahaitukam* ॥ 8

असत्यम् *asatyam* without truth अप्रतिष्ठम् *apratiṣtham* without moral basis ते *te* they जगत् *jagat* the world आहुः *āhuḥ* say अनीश्वरम् *anīśvaram* without a God अपरस्परसंभूतम् *aparaspara sambhūtam* brought about by mutual union किम् *kim* what अन्यत् *anyat* else कामहैतुकम् *kāmahaitukam* with lust for its cause

Men are of two kinds. Those of mere man's mould only are base and vulgar. Lust and greed for wealth govern them. But the superior kind of men strive for spiritual eminence.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥ १३

इदम् अद्य मया लभ्-तम् इदम् प्र-आप्-स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदम् अस्-ति इदम् अपि मे भू-इ-स्यति पुनः धनम् ॥

*idam adya mayā labdham idaṁ prāpsye manoratham* ।
*idam astī 'dam api me bhaviṣyati punar dhanam* ॥

इदम् *idaṁ* this अद्य *adya* today मया *mayā* by me लब्धम् *labdhaṁ* has been gained इदम् *idaṁ* this प्राप्स्ये *prāpsye* (I) shall obtain मनोरथम् *manorathaṁ* desire इदम् *idaṁ* this अस्ति *asti* is इदम् *idaṁ* this अपि *api* also मे *me* to me भविष्यति *bhaviṣyati* shall be पुनः *punaḥ* again धनम् *dhanaṁ* wealth

**"This today has been gained by me; this desire I shall fulfil; this is mine, and this wealth also shall be mine in future." 13**

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।
ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥ १४

असौ मया हृ(न्)-तः शत्रुः हन्-इ-स्ये च अ-परान् अपि ।
ईश्वरः अहम् अहम् भोगी सिध्-तः अहम् बल-वान् सुखी ॥

*asau mayā hataḥ śatrur haniṣye cā 'parān api* ।
*īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī siddho 'haṁ balavān sukhī* ॥

असौ *asau* that मया *mayā* by me हतः *hataḥ* slain शत्रुः *śatruḥ* enemy हनिष्ये *haniṣye* (I) shall slay च *ca* and अपरान् *aparān* others अपि *api* also ईश्वरः *īśvaraḥ* lord अहम् *ahaṁ* I अहम् *ahaṁ* I भोगी *bhogī* the enjoyer सिद्धः

come forth उग्रकर्माण *ugra karmāṇaḥ* of fierce deeds क्षयाय *kṣayāya* for the destruction जगत *jagataḥ* of the world अहिता *ahitāḥ* enemies

**Holding this view, these ruined souls of small intellect, of fierce deeds, rise as the enemies of the world for its destruction. 9**

Man's intellect dwindles away as he becomes slave to the senses Inordinate sense indulgence ends in self-annihilation *Adharma* or wickedness is the outcome of it This vicious act contaminates the world and causes the greatest harm Still, they have a negative purpose to serve That falsehood and wickedness are not the paths to self-emancipation, is made evident by the base life of the demoniac

The evil ways of the diabolical are further illustrated —

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।
मोहाद्गृहीत्वाऽसद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥ १०

कामम् आ-श्रि-त्-य दुष्पूरम् दम्भ मान-मद-अनु-इ-ता ।
मोहाद् गृह-इत्वा अ सद् ग्राहान् प्र-वर्तन्ते अ-शुचि व्रता ॥

*kāmam āśritya duṣpūram dambhamānamadānvitāḥ |*
*mohād gṛhītvā 'sadgrāhān pravartante 'śucivratāḥ ||*

कामम् *kāmam* desire आश्रित्य *āśritya* abiding in दुष्पूरम् *duṣpūram* insatiable दम्भ मान मद अन्विता *dambha māna mada anvitāḥ* full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance मोहात् *mohāt* through delusion गृहीत्वा *gṛhītvā* having held असद्ग्राहान् *asadgrāhān* evil ideas प्रवर्तन्ते *pravartante* they work अशुचिव्रता *aśuci vratāḥ* with impure resolves

entangled in the snare of delusion प्रसक्ताः *prasaktāḥ* addicted कामभोगेषु *kāma bhogeṣu* to the gratification of lust पतन्ति *patanti* (they) fall नरके *narake* into hell अशुचौ *aśucau* foul

**Bewildered by many a fancy, enmeshed in the snare of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall into a foul hell. 16**

Whatever one has in one's mind is projected by that one on the world outside and fancied as an external reality. To the one good at heart the external world is a heaven. But to another vile at heart, the same world offers a spectacle of a foul hell.

The Asuras also resort to the performance of *Yajna*. The mode of it is as follows:—

आत्मसंभाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ १७

आत्म(न्)-सम्-भाविताः स्तब्धाः धन-मान-मद-अनु-इ-ताः ।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैः ते दम्भेन अ-विधि-पूर्व-कम् ॥

*ātmasaṁbhāvitāḥ stabdhā dhanamānamadānvitāḥ* ।
*yajante nāmayajñais te dambhenā 'vidhipūrvakam* ॥

आत्मसम्भाविताः *ātma saṁbhāvitāḥ* self-conceited स्तब्धाः *stabdhāḥ* stubborn धनमानमद अन्विताः *dhana māna mada anvitāḥ* filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth यजन्ते *yajante* (they) perform नामयज्ञैः *nāma yajñaiḥ* sacrifices in name ते *te* they दम्भेन *dambhena* out of ostentation अविधिपूर्वकम् *avidhi pūrvakaṁ* contrary to scriptural ordinances

death of her baby The next moment she is busy arranging her jewels and costly clothings, scrupulously attending to her toilet as well! The parents are driven into penury because of the marriages of two or three daughters Still the begetting continues as usual! In litigation the property is drained away, but on that ground further litigation does not stop Though there is no wherewithal to maintain the existing brood of children, new additions do not fail to come in year after year. How strange!

—Sri Ramakrishna

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥ १२

आशा-पाश-शतै बद्धा काम-क्रोध-पर-अयना ।
ईह्-अन्ते काम-भोग-अर्थम् अ-न्यायेन अर्थ-सम्-चयान् ॥

*āśāpāśaśatair baddhāḥ kāmakrodhaparāyanāḥ* ।
*īhante kāmabhogārtham anyāyenā 'rthasamcayān* ॥

आशापाशशतैः *āśā pāśa śataiḥ* by a hundred ties of hope बद्धा *baddhāḥ* bound कामक्रोधपरायणा *kāma krodha parāyanāḥ* given over to lust and anger ईहन्ते *īhante* (they) strive कामभोग अर्थम् *kāma bhoga artham* for sensual enjoyment अन्यायेन *anyāyena* by unlawful means अर्थसचयान् *artha samcayān* hoards of wealth

**Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they strive to secure by unjust means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyment. 12**

*Dravya yajna* or the worship of the Lord through the acquisition of wealth by fair means and the expenditure of it on noble causes, is enjoined in the scriptures; and the virtuous people adopt it in their lives But the men of Asura mould make life complicated by cruel competition. Frenzy, falsehood and fraud are the norm with them. They amass wealth rapaciously for voluptuous sense-indulgence.

Men of demoniacal disposition magnify whatever little merit that is found in them and claim for themselves qualifications to which they are utter strangers. It is impossible to rid them of conceit born of ignorance. The power that is theirs is utilized for humiliating others. The insolence inherent in them goads them ever into the wrong path. That the Lord's benign presence is in the hearts of all is denied by them. By sense-indulgence they despoil their bodies which are all the temples of God; by hurting others they commit the same offence again against God. The downfall of the demoniac is in this way sealed.

**The Fall of the Asuras — 19-21**

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ १९

तान् अहम् द्विषतः क्रूरान् सम्-सारेषु नर-अधमान् ।
क्षिपामि अजस्रम् अ-शुभान् आसुरीषु एव योनिषु ॥

*tān ahaṁ dviṣataḥ krūrān saṁsāreṣu narādhamān* ।
*kṣipāmy ajasram aśubhān āsurīṣv eva yoniṣu* ॥

तान् *tān* those अहम् *ahaṁ* I द्विषत: *dviṣataḥ* (the) hating (ones) क्रूरान् *krūrān* cruel संसारेषु *saṁsāreṣu* in the worlds नराधमान् *narādhamān* worst among men क्षिपामि *kṣipāmi* (I) hurl अजस्रम् *ajasraṁ* for ever अशुभान् *aśubhān* impure आसुरीषु *āsurīṣu* of demons एव *eva* only योनिषु *yoniṣu* in wombs

**Those cruel haters, worst among men in the world, I hurl these evil-doers for ever into the wombs of the demons only. 19**

*siddhaḥ* perfect अहम् *aham* I बलवान् *balavān* powerful सुखी *sukhī* happy

**"That enemy has been slain by me, and others also shall I slay. I am a lord, I enjoy, I am successful, powerful and happy." 14**

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥ १५

आढ्य अभिजन-वान् अस्-मि क अन्य अस्-ति सदृश मया ।
यज्-स्ये दा-स्यामि मोदिष्ये इति अ-ज्ञान-वि-मोहिता ॥

*ādhyo 'bhijanavān asmi ko 'nyo 'sti sadṛśo mayā |*
*yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya ity ajñānavimohitāḥ ||*

आढ्य *ādhyaḥ* rich अभिजनवान् *abhijanavān* well-born अस्मि *asmi* (I) am क *kaḥ* who अन्य *anyaḥ* else अस्ति *asti* is सदृश *sadṛśaḥ* equal मया *mayā* to me यक्ष्ये *yakṣye* (I) will sacrifice दास्यामि *dāsyāmi* (I) will give मोदिष्ये *modiṣye* (I) will rejoice इति *iti* thus अज्ञानविमोहिता *ajñāna vimohitāḥ* deluded by ignorance

**"I am rich and well-born. Who else is equal to me? I will sacrifice, I will give alms, I will rejoice." Thus deluded by ignorance; 15**

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥ १६

अन् एक चि त्त वि भ्रान्ता मोह-जाल सम्-आ-वृ-ता ।
प्र सक्ता काम-भोगेषु पत्-अन्ति नरके अ-शुचौ ॥

*aneka citta vibhrāntā moha jāla samāvṛtāḥ |*
*prasaktāḥ kāmabhogeṣu patanti narake 'śucau ||*

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता *aneka citta vibhrāntāḥ* bewildered by many a fancy मोहजालसमावृता *moha jāla samāvṛtāḥ*

त्रि-विधम् नरकस्य इदम् द्वारम् नाशनम् आत्मनः ।
कामः क्रोधः तथा लोभः तस्मात् एतत् त्रयम् त्यजेत् ॥

*trividhaṁ narakasye 'daṁ dvāraṁ nāśanam ātmanaḥ* ।
*kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayaṁ tyajet*

त्रिविधम् *trividham* triple नरकस्य *narakasya* of hell इदम् *idaṁ* this द्वारम् *dvāraṁ* gate नाशनम् *nāśanaṁ* destructive आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self कामः *kāmaḥ* lust क्रोधः *krodhaḥ* anger तथा *tathā* also लोभः *lobhaḥ* greed तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore एतत् *etat* this त्रयम् *trayaṁ* three त्यजेत् *tyajet* (one) should abandon

**Triple is this gate of hell, destructive of the self — lust, anger and greed; therefore should one abandon these three. 21**

The origin of the demoniacal disposition is pointed out here. It is fostered by these three evils. The nature of greed is to appropriate all objects of sense-enjoyment exclusively to oneself. Any one of the three vices mentioned here is sufficient to bind man to abomination. Woe unto man when all the three make an alliance and rule his mind. They do not allow him to emerge from wickedness.

Is there then no hope of emancipation to the man caught in the whirlpool of this three-faced hell? The answer comes :—

**Liberation from the Asura Fetters — 22**

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ २२

एतैः वि-मुच्-तः कौन्तेय तमः द्वारैः त्रिभिः नरः ।
आ-चरति आत्मनः श्रेयः ततः या-ति पराम् ग(म्)-तिम् ॥

**Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifice in name for ostentation, disregarding ordinance. 17**

The performance of rituals has undergone change with the passage of time. The performance of *Yajna* has become scarce in these days, the temple worship having taken up its place. There are people today who build temples for self-advertisement, who conduct religious celebrations for pomp and show and who arrange for elaborate and costly worship in temples not for devotion but for name and fame.

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥ १८

अहम्-कारम् बलम् दर्पम् कामम् क्रोधम् च सम्-श्रि-ता ।
माम् आत्म(न्)-पर-देहेषु प्र-द्विष् अन्त अभि असूयका ॥

*ahamkāram balam darpam*
*kāmam krodham ca samśritāḥ* ।
*mām ātmaparadehesu*
*pradvisanto 'bhyasūyakāḥ* ॥

अहंकारम् *ahamkāram* egoism बलम् *balam* power दर्पम् *darpam* haughtiness कामम् *kāmam* lust क्रोधम् *krodham* anger च *ca* and संश्रिता *samśritāḥ* refuged in माम् *mām* me आत्मपरदेहेषु *ātma para dehesu* in their own bodies and in those of others प्रद्विषन्त *pradviṣantaḥ* hating अभ्यसूयका *abhyasūyakāḥ* these malicious people.

**Given over to egoism, power, insolence, lust and wrath, these malicious people hate Me in their own bodies and those of others. 18**

यः शास्त्र-विधिम् उद्-सृज्य वर्ते-ते कामकारतः ।
न सः सिद्धिम् अव-आप्-नोति न सुखम् न पराम् ग(म्)-तिम् ॥

*yaḥ śāstravidhim utsṛjya vartate kāmakārataḥ ।*
*na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim ॥*

यः *yaḥ* who शास्त्रविधिम् *śāstra vidhiṁ* the ordinances of the scriptures उत्सृज्य *utsṛjya* having cast aside वर्तते *vartate* acts कामकारतः *kāmakārataḥ* under the impulse of desire न *na* not सः *saḥ* he सिद्धिम् *siddhiṁ* perfection अवाप्नोति *avāpnoti* attains न *na* not सुखम् *sukhaṁ* happiness न *na* not पराम् *parāṁ* supreme गतिम् *gatiṁ* goal

**He who, casting aside the ordinances of the scriptures, acts on the impulse of desire, attains not perfection, nor happiness nor the Supreme Goal. 23**

The function of the scriptures is to guide man to perfection. The injunction from them comes both positively and negatively. Exhortation to do the good and auspicious is the positive injunction; and admonition against doing the bad and harmful deeds is the negative injunction. But the way of the Asuras is to behave counter to the teachings of the scriptures. They indulge in the prohibited acts and refrain from the sanctioned ones. Whereas by obeying and faithfully following the ordinances of the scriptures, man progresses towards perfection. Its immediate result is that he gains in happiness in the life here and he prepares himself for the Supreme Goal that is to be gained ultimately.

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥ २४

Transmigration into the high or the low is according to karma And its continuity is kept up by the force of karma which persists until the dawn of knowledge The Lord therefore makes this statement

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥ २०

आसुरीम् योनिम् आ पद्-(ता)ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
माम् अ प्र आप् य एव कौन्तेय तत यान्ति अधमाम् गतिम् ॥

*āsurīm yonim āpannā mūdhā janmani janmani |*
*mām aprāpyai 'va kaunteya tato yānty adhamām gatim*

आसुरीम् *āsurīm* demoniacal योनिम् *yonim* womb आपन्ना *āpannāh* entering into मूढा *mūdhāḥ* deluded जन्मनि जन्मनि *janmani janmani* in birth after birth माम् *mām* me अप्राप्य *aprāpya* not attaining एव *eva* still कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya तत *tataḥ* than that यान्ति *yānti* they fall into अधमाम् *adhamām* lower गतिम् *gatim* condition

**Entering into demoniac wombs, the deluded ones, in birth after birth, without ever reaching Me, they thus fall, O Kaunteya, into a condition still lower. 20**

The base nature in a man hurls him into states baser and yet baser Like a stone rolled down the slope of a hill, he falls into the abyss of depravity.

What is the root cause of the depravity of man? The answer comes —

त्रिविध नरकस्येद द्वार नाशनमात्मनः ।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ २१

and I act and live as I am guided by that Being. Therefore, I have not made any mistake in my life. What I am made to do and to utter by the Deity within, would not come into conflict with the *Sastras*." This was the answer given by

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे दैवासुरसंपद्विभागयोगो नाम
षोडशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde daivāsurasaṁpad vibhāgayogo nāma ṣoḍaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the sixteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DIVISION BETWEEN
THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIACAL

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*etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya tamodvārais tribhir naraḥ |*
*ācaraty ātmanaḥ śreyas tato yāti parām gatim ||*

एतै· *etaiḥ* from this विमुक्त· *vimuktaḥ* liberated कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya तमोद्वारै· *tamodvāraiḥ* gates to darkness त्रिभिः *tribhiḥ* (by) three नरः *naraḥ* the man आचरति *ācarati* practises आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* own श्रेय· *śreyaḥ* what is good ततः *tataḥ* and then याति *yāti* goes to पराम् *parām* the supreme गतिम् *gatim* goal

**The man who is liberated from these three gates to darkness, O Kaunteya, practises what is good for him and thus goes to the Supreme Good. 22**

Misery is another name for hell. Whenever man is afflicted and unhappy he is for the time being in hell. And why should there be this unwanted hellishness for him? It is all due to his want of insight. Ignorance is the root of all misery. It is again the originator of lust, anger and greed. The Satan of ignorance is the instigator inducing man to indulge in lust, anger and greed. When these three evils are eliminated, the path of enlightenment opens. The darkness of ignorance vanishes of its own accord. Man progresses in *Sreyas*. When the demoniacal man takes to the divine way his progress is very rapid. A zealous convert that he is, he hastens quickly Godward.

Which is the unerring guidance that helps man go Godward? The guidance comes :—

Scripture is the Guide — 23-24

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥ २३

Arjuna is obliged to raise this question for obvious reasons. There are people who are very earnest about pursuing the path of self-perfection. To that extent, therefore, they are free from lust, anger and greed. They are definitely not of the demoniac type. Their knowledge of the scriptural ordinances is very meagre, though they are not antipathic to it. Circumstances do not permit their acquiring accurate and elaborate knowledge of the scriptures. They pursue the right path being prompted by their pure motive. Is their earnestness to be regarded as Sattvika which takes them upward, or as Rajasika which keeps them where they are, or as Tamasika which pushes them downward?

श्री भगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥ २

त्रि-विधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनाम् सा स्व-भाव-जा ।
सात्त्विकी राजसी च एव तामसी च इति ताम् श्र(नु)णु ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca*

*trividhā bhavati śraddhā dehināṁ sā svabhāvajā* |
*sāttvikī rājasī cai 'va tāmasī ce 'ti tāṁ śṛṇu* ||

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Sri Bhagavan said:

त्रिविधा *trividhā* threefold भवति *bhavati* is श्रद्धा *śraddhā* faith देहिनाम् *dehināṁ* of the embodied सा *sā* which स्वभावजा *svabhāvajā* inherent in nature सात्त्विकी *sāttvikī* Sattvika राजसी *rājasī* Rajasika च *ca* and एव *eva* even तामसी *tāmasī* Tamasika च *ca* and इति *iti* thus ताम् *tāṁ* of it शृणु *śṛṇu* hear (thou)

तस्मात् शास्त्रम प्र-मानम ते कार्य-अकार्य-वि-अव-स्थितौ ।
ज्ञा-त्वा शास्त्र वि धान उक्तम् कर्म कर्तुम् इह अर्हसि ॥

*tasmāc chāstram pramānam te kāryākāryavyavasthitau*
*jñātvā śāstravidhānoktam karma kartum ihā 'rhasi* ||

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore शास्त्रम् *śāstram* Sastra प्रमाणम् *pramānam* (be) authority ते *te* they कार्य अकार्य व्यवस्थितौ *kārya akārya vyavasthitau* in determining what ought to be done or what ought not to be done ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known शास्त्रविधान उक्तम् *śāstra vidhāna uktam* what is said in the ordinance of the Sastras कर्म *karma* action कर्तुम् *kartum* to do इह *iha* here (in this world) अर्हसि *arhasi* shouldst

**Therefore, let the scriptures be your authority in deciding what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinance of the scriptures you should act here. 24**

The purpose of the scriptures is to guide man in living a perfect life on earth and to remind him repeatedly of the Supreme Goal which is supramundane and which ought to be sought after earnestly. This being the case, bound as man is both to karma and to earth, whatever he does here on earth ought to get the sanction of the scriptures. And those that are divinely disposed involuntarily do acts that are quite in tune with the teachings of the scriptures In fact their doings and the injunctions of the scriptures are in corroboration of one another.

"What particular *Sastra* do you follow?" was the question put to Sri Ramakrishna by a devotee "I follow no *Sastra* whatever I plead with the Deity residing in my heart for directions,

Free-will comes increasingly into play as beings evolve in existence. The higher the being, the more its free-will is in evidence. At the human level it comes into bold relief. The destiny of man is shaped by the use to which this faculty is put. We call it *sraddhā* when the free-will is all directed to self-emulation. This endeavour in particular is the prerogative of man. The attitude assumed by the mind characterizes its *sraddhā*. It is awake to the reality of things and alert to play its part efficiently. In the discharge of duty, it is given to zeal and not sloth and ease. The man of *sraddhā* has confidence in himself, faith in the ideal he has chosen and reverence for the person who guides him. The means that he adopts is always pure and praiseworthy. He is ever calm and composed while translating his ideal into practice.

The youth Nachiketas of the Kathopanishad fame is a model for *sraddhā*. The *Visvajit Yajna* performed by his father Gautama was found by him to be defective and devoid of the required earnestness. The faithful son therefore offered himself to be given away as gift to somebody, hoping that this act would be at least a partial atonement for the parsimonious way of the father. But the unwilling father became annoyed and blurted out that he would hand the lad over to Yama, the god of death. The dutiful son wedded to truth felt that no word of his father should ever pass off as empty utterance devoid of intent. He not only made the parent's pronouncement meaningful but also gained in karma and *jnāna* by his duty-bound departure to the domains of

# श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगः

## SRADDHATRAYA VIBHAGA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF THE THREEFOLD SRADDHA

## CHAPTER XVII

Confidence Graded—The Three Kinds of Food—The Three Types of Worship—The Threefold Austerity—The Threefold Gift—Demerits Turned into Merits

### Confidence Graded — 1-7

अर्जुन उवाच

**ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।**
**तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥ १**

ये शास्त्र-विधिम् उद्-सृज्-य यजन्ते श्रद्धया अनु-इता ।
तेषाम् नि-(स्था)ष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सद्-त्वम् आहो रज तम ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*ye śāstravidhim utsṛjya yajante śraddhayā 'nvitāḥ* ।
*teṣām niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa sattvam āho rajas tamaḥ* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said

ये *ye* who शास्त्रविधिम् *śāstra vidhim* the ordinances of the scriptures उत्सृज्य *utsṛjya* setting aside यजन्ते *yajante* perform sacrifice श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith अन्विता *anvitāḥ* endowed तेषाम् *teṣām* their निष्ठा *niṣṭhā* condition तु *tu* verily का *kā* what कृष्ण *kṛṣṇa* O Krishna सत्त्वम् *sattvam* Sattva आहो *āho* or रज *rajaḥ* Rajas तमः *tamaḥ* Tamas

**Arjuna said**

**What is the nature of the devotion of those, O Krishna, who though disregarding the ordinance of the Sastras, perform sacrifice with Sraddha? Is it one of Sattva, Rajas or Tamas? 1**

Rajasikas प्रेतान् *pretān* ghosts भूतगणान् *bhūta gaṇān* the hosts of Bhutas or the nature-spirits च *ca* and अन्ये *anye* the others यजन्ते *yajante* worship तामसाः *tāmasāḥ* the Tamasika जनाः *janāḥ* people

**Sattvika men worship the Devas; Rajasika, the Yakshas and the Rakshasas; the others–the Tamasika men – the Pretas and the hosts of Bhutas. 4**

Men commingle with men in accordance with their temperament and disposition. It is but natural that the good associate with the good, and the bad with the bad. This classification goes on in the realm of worship as well. The *Sāttvika* group takes to the adoration of the Paramatman whose facets are Siva, Vishnu, Ambika, Ganesa and Subrahmanya. The *Rajasika* type attributes to the deity or deities characteristics which are their own. Revenge, wrath, vandalism - these are the traits attributed by the *Rajasika* men to their gods whom they worship ardently. The *Tamasika* men are lazy and ignorant. Their conception of godhood is in tune with their disposition. The god they worship is a wild deity that delights in hurting and teasing people.

The *Sāttvika* men are few in number. The others are in majority. Their ways are as follows:-

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः ॥ ५
कर्शयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः ।
मां चैवान्तः शरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान् ॥ ६

**The Blessed Lord said:**

**The Sraddha of the embodied is of three kinds, born of their nature — the Sattvika, the Rajasika and the Tamasika. Hear now about it. 2**

The doings of a *Jivatman* get imbedded in his mind as impressions, which do not perish along with the death of the gross body. They are latent in the mind stuff to remanifest themselves as tendencies in the next birth. The continuity of his disposition is kept up in this way. By observing his inclinations and doings from birth onwards, the Guna predominant in him can be detected. The intrinsic make up of a *Jivatman* reveals itself in the following manner :—

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥ ३

सत्त्व-अनुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।
श्रद्धा-मय अयम् पुरुष. यः यद्-श्रद्धः सः एव सः ॥

*sattvānurūpā sarvasya śraddhā bhavati bhārata* ।
*śraddhāmayo 'yam puruṣo yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*

सत्त्व अनुरूपा *sattva anurūpā* in accordance with his nature सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of each श्रद्धा *śraddhā* faith भवति *bhavati* is भारत *bhārata* O Bharata श्रद्धामयः *śraddhā mayaḥ* consists of faith अयम् *ayam* this पुरुषः *puruṣaḥ* man यः *yaḥ* who यत् श्रद्धः *yat śraddhaḥ* what (his) faith is सः *saḥ* he एव *eva* verily सः *saḥ* that (is)

**The Sraddha of every man, O Bharata, is in accordance with his natural disposition. Man is of the nature of his Sraddha; what his Sraddha is, that verily he is. 3**

lifted up, they try to stand on one leg only, hoping to acquire mystic powers thereby. They keep gazing at the sun constantly unmindful of the harm done to the eyes. Their attempts are as much painful to the beholders as to the performers themselves. The Lord residing in the heart as conscience is denied by these demoniac people. He who is beyond happiness and misery seems to be subjected to misery at the hands of these crude people. Their so-called self-culture is in no way in tune with the path followed by the holy men. It runs counter to the teachings of the scriptures. They seem to be endowed with *sraddhā*, but actually their practices are derogatory.

What are the other practices by which the attainments of men may be sorted out? The answer comes :—

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥ ७

आ-हारः तु अपि सर्वस्य त्रि-विधः भवति प्रियः ।
यज्ञः तपः तथा दानम् तेषाम् भेदम् इमम् शृणु ॥

*āhāras tv api sarvasya trividho bhavati priyaḥ* ।
*yajñas tapas tathā dānaṁ teṣāṁ bhedam imaṁ śṛṇu* ॥

आहारः *āhāraḥ* food तु *tu* indeed अपि *api* also सर्वस्य *sarvasya* of all त्रिविधः *trividhaḥ* threefold भवति *bhavati* is प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear यज्ञः *yajñaḥ* sacrifice तपः *tapaḥ* austerity तथा *tathā* also दानम् *dānaṁ* alms-giving तेषाम् *teṣāṁ* their भेदम् *bhedaṁ* distinction इमम् *imaṁ* this शृणु *śṛṇu* hear

**The food also that is dear to all is of three kinds. So are the Yajnas, austerities and gifts. Hear now of the distinction of these.** **7**

Yama The all-inclusiveness of his *sraddhā* is evinced by his choice of the three boons bestowed on him by the lord of death For the first boon, he sought the pacification of his father, as a loving and dutiful son For the second boon, he sought the ways and means of earning all earthly prosperity and enjoyment As the third boon he obtained Supreme Knowledge from Yama The selection of the boons indicates the lad's exemplary character and awareness to the ideals in life

A stone soars up in the sky to the extent momentum is imparted to it. A tree grows up in tune with its inherent vitality. A lotus shoots up along with the rise in the level of the water in the pond Similarly, man rises in his worth and attainments corresponding to the *sraddhā* with which he is endowed He is nothing more and nothing less than what his *sraddhā* is.

The *sraddhā* in a man manifests itself in various channels One among them is in the adoration that he makes of the Almighty Its worth is as follows :—

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥ ४

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान् यक्ष-रक्षांसि राजसा ।
प्र-इतान् भूत गणान् च अन्ये यजन्ते तामसा जना ॥

*yajante sāttvikā devān yakṣarakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ* ।
*pretān bhūtaganāṁś cā 'nye yajante tāmasā janāḥ* ॥

यजन्ते *yajante* worship सात्त्विका *sāttvikāḥ* the Sattvika men देवान् *devān* the gods यक्षरक्षांसि *yakṣa rakṣāṁsi* the Yakshas and the Rakshasas राजसा *rājasāḥ* the

gives a prolonged sustenance to the consumer. The non-substantial food gets quickly digested. It gives no vigour to the body. But the food that is hard to digest weakens the digestive organs and hinders longevity. Time and place have their part to play in the consumption of the foods mentioned herein. Breakfast should necessarily be light. Supper should be so adjusted that while going to bed at night, the digestive organs also have the needed rest. Attention may be paid to the partaking of warmth-giving foods in cold countries and of those that have a cooling effect in hot countries.

Eat as much as you require in the day time; but reduce the food as much as you can at night.

— Sri Ramakrishna

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥ ९

कटु-अम्ल-लवण-अति-उष्ण तीक्ष्ण-रूक्ष-वि-दाहिनः ।
आहाराः राजसस्य इष्टाः दुःख-शोक-आमय-प्रदाः ॥

*kaṭvamla lavaṇātyuṣṇa tīkṣṇa rūkṣa vidāhinaḥ* ।
*āhārā rājasasye 'ṣṭā duḥkha śokāmaya pradāḥ* ॥

कटुः *kaṭuḥ* (those that are) bitter अम्लः *amlaḥ* sour लवणः *lavaṇaḥ* saline अत्युष्णः *atyuṣṇaḥ* excessively hot तीक्ष्णः *tīkṣṇaḥ* pungent रूक्षः *rūkṣaḥ* dry विदाही *vidāhī* burning आहाराः *āhārāḥ* foods राजसस्य *rājasasya* of the Rajasika इष्टाः *iṣṭāḥ* are liked दुःखशोक आमयप्रदाः *duḥkha śoka āmaya pradāḥ* are productive of pain, grief and disease

**The foods that are bitter, sour, saline, over-hot, pungent, dry and burning are liked by the Rajasika, and are productive of pain, grief and disease.** 9

अ-शास्त्र-वि-हितम् घोरम् तप्यन्ते ये तप जना ।
दम्भ-अहम्-कार-सम्-युक्ता. काम-राग-बल-अन्विता ॥

कर्शयन्त शरीर-स्थम् भूत ग्रामम् अचेतस ।
माम् च एव अन्त' शरीर-स्थम् तान् विद्-(हि)धि-आसुर-निश्चयान् ॥

*aśāstravihitam ghoram tapyante ye tapo janāḥ* ।
*dambhāhamkāra samyuktāḥ kāma rāga balānvitāḥ* ॥

*karśayantaḥ śarīrastham bhūtagrāmam acetasaḥ* ।
*mām cai 'vā 'ntaḥśarīrastham tān viddhy āsuraniścayān*

अशास्त्रविहितम् *aśāstra vihitam* not enjoined by the scripture घोरम् *ghoram* terrific तप्यन्ते *tapyante* practise ये *ye* who तप *tapah* austerity जना *janāḥ* men दम्भ अहंकार सयुक्ता *dambha ahamkāra samyuktāḥ* given to hypocrisy and egoism कामरागबल अन्विता. *kāma rāga bala anvitāḥ* by the force of lust and attachment

कर्शयन्त: *karśayantaḥ* torturing शरीरस्थम् *śarīrastham* in the body भूतग्रामम् *bhūta grāmam* all the elements अचेतस: *acetasaḥ* senseless माम् *mām* me च *ca* and एव *eva* even अन्त शरीरस्थम् *antaḥ śarīra stham* who dwells in the body तान् *tān* them विद्धि *viddhi* know आसुरनिश्चयान् *āsura niścayān* to be of demoniac resolve

**Those men who practise violent austerities not enjoined by the scriptures, given to hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by the force of lust and attachment,** 5

**Fools that they are, they torture their bodily organs, and Me, too, who dwell within the body—know that they are Asurika in their resolve.** 6

The austerities practised by the *Asurika* people are in no way pleasing to themselves. Bare-bodied they lie on spikes. While keeping one hand always

colour as it gets rotten. The putrid food produces foul odour. Old food becomes stale. The spoilt food becomes tasteless. The food already tasted by somebody is unfit to be taken by another. The remnants left over in plate by one individual are unfit to be served to another. People with a *Tamasika* disposition are heedless to all these restrictions. They help themselves to any impure and rotten food without the least hesitation. Their attainments are indicated by the sort of food they take and the manner in which they partake of it.

The way in which adoration is made to the Almighty is another indicator of the spiritual attainments of people. It is being elaborated as follows:—

**The Three Types of Worship — 11-13**

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥ ११

अ-फल-आ-काङ्क्षिभिः यज्ञः विधि-दृष्टः यः (यज्) इज्-य-ते ।
यष्टव्यम् (यज्-तव्यम्) एव इति मनः सम्-आ-धा-य सः सात्त्विकः ॥

*aphalākāṅkṣibhir yajño vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijyate* ।
*yaṣṭavyam eve 'ti manaḥ samādhāya sa sāttvikaḥ* ॥

अफल आकांक्षिभिः *aphala ākāṅkṣibhiḥ* by men desiring no fruit यज्ञः *yajñaḥ* sacrifice विधिदृष्टः *vidhi dṛṣṭaḥ* as enjoined by the ordinance यः *yaḥ* which इज्यते *ijyate* is offered यष्टव्यम् *yaṣṭavyaṁ* ought to be offered एव *eva* only इति *iti* thus मनः *manaḥ* the mind समाधाय *samādhāya* having fixed सः *saḥ* that सात्त्विकः *sāttvikaḥ* Sattvika

**That Yajna is Sattvika which is performed by men desiring no fruit, as enjoined by ordinance, with their mind fixed on the Yajna only, for its own sake.**

The food habits, traditions, usages and meritorious acts may vary among nations and countries. There may be apparent conflicts among them. But karma by itself is neither good nor bad. The motive that impels it and the effect that it produces on man contribute to make it good or bad. How the sanctioned karmas that are conducive to spiritual progress get vitiated at the hands of the diabolical is dilated upon here.

The Three Kinds of Food — 8-10

आयुः सत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥ ८

आयुः सद्-त्त्व-बल-आरोग्य सुख-प्रीति-वि-वर्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिराः हृद्याः आ-हाराः सात्त्विक-प्रियाः ॥

*āyuḥ sattva balārogya sukha prīti vivardhanāḥ* ।
*rasyāḥ snigdhāḥ sthirā hṛdyā āhārāḥ sāttvikapriyāḥ* ॥

आयु.सत्त्वबलआरोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धना. *āyuḥ sattva bala ārogya sukha prīti vivardhanāḥ* those which increase Ayu (life). Sattva (purity), Balam (strength). Arogyam (health). Sukham (joy), Prithi (cheerfulness and good appetite) रस्याः *rasyāḥ* what are savoury स्निग्धाः *snigdhāḥ* oleaginous स्थिराः *sthirāh* substantial हृद्या *hṛdyāḥ* agreeable आहारा. *āhārāḥ* the foods सात्त्विकप्रियाः *sāttvika priyāḥ* are dear to the Sattvika

**The foods that augment vitality, energy, vigour, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are savoury and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are liked by the Sattvika. 8**

The food that adds to cheerfulness is also a promoter of appetite. The food that is substantial

the Bharatas तम् *tam* that यज्ञम् *yajñam* sacrifice विद्धि *viddhi* know राजसम् *rājasam* Rajasika

**That which is performed, O best of the Bharatas, in expectation of reward or for self-glorification, know it to be a Rajasika Yajna. 12**

It is no true worship which is done in a bartering spirit. The man offers an oblation to the Lord and appeals to him for a favour or mercy or a miraculous cure of a disease. There is another man who offers worship for a show, for advertisement or for self-glorification. All these forms of worship are of *Rajasika* nature, more detrimental than helpful to spiritual progress.

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।
श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ॥ १३

विधि-हीनम् अ-सृष्ट-(अद्-न) अन्नम् मन्त्र-हीनम् अ-दक्षिणम् ।
श्रद्धा-वि-रहितम् यज्ञम् तामसम् परि-चक्ष्-अते ॥

*vidhihīnam asṛṣṭānnaṁ mantrahīnam adakṣiṇam* ।
*śraddhāvirahitaṁ yajñaṁ tāmasaṁ paricakṣate* ॥

विधिहीनम् *vidhihīnaṁ* without keeping to ordinance असृष्ट अन्नम् *asṛṣṭa annaṁ* in which no food is distributed मन्त्रहीनम् *mantra hīnaṁ* which is devoid of Mantras अदक्षिणम् *adakṣiṇaṁ* which is devoid of gifts श्रद्धाविरहितम् *śraddhā virahitaṁ* which is devoid of faith यज्ञम् *yajñaṁ* sacrifice तामसम् *tāmasaṁ* Tamasika परिचक्षते *paricakṣate* (they) declare

**They declare that Yajna to be Tamasika which is contrary to the ordinances, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of Mantras, gifts and Sraddha. 13**

There is tingling and burning in the tongue; the eyes get bloodshot and tears trickle down profusely; the nostrils water copiously; the head reels; the stomach burns—these are the characteristics of the *Rajasika* foods. They tell upon the duration of the life of the consumer, they are definitely injurious to spiritual practices.

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥ १०

यात-यामम् गत-रसम् पूति परि-उषितम् च यत् ।
उद्-शिष्टम् अपि च अ-मेध्यम् भोजनम् तामस-प्रियम् ॥

*yātayāmaṁ gatarasaṁ pūti paryusitam ca yat ।*
*ucchiṣṭam api cā 'medhyaṁ bhojanaṁ tāmasapriyam ॥*

यातयामम् *yāta yāmaṁ* (is) stale गतरसम् *gata rasam* is tasteless पूति *pūti* putrid पर्युषितम् *paryuṣitam* rotten च *ca* and यत् *yat* which उच्छिष्टम् *ucchiṣṭam* refuse अपि *api* also च *ca* and अमेध्यम् *amedhyaṁ* impure भोजनम् *bhojanaṁ* food तामसप्रियम् *tāmasa priyam* liked by the Tamasika

**That which is stale, tasteless, stinking, cooked overnight, refuse and impure is the food liked by the Tamasika. 10**

Discrimination has to be used in regard to the *food cooked overnight. There are certain kinds of* food which cannot be used immediately after cooking, but have to be kept for hours or even days before being used. There are others which have to be consumed soon after preparation. The fitness for consumption or otherwise of a food article is self-revealed. A fruit kept long loses its attractive

**The Threefold Austerity — 14-19**

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥ १४

देव-द्वि-ज गुरु-प्राज्ञ पूजनम् शौचम् आर्जवम् ।
ब्रह्मचर्यम् अ-हिंसा च शारीरम् तपः (ब्रू)उच्-यते ॥

*deva dvija guru prājña pūjanaṁ śaucam ārjavam* ।
*brahmacaryam ahiṁsā ca śārīraṁ tapa ucyate* ॥

देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनम् *deva dvija guru prājña pūjanaṁ* worship of the Gods, the twice-born, the teachers and the wise शौचम् *śaucaṁ* purity आर्जवम् *ārjavaṁ* straightforwardness ब्रह्मचर्यम् *brahmacaryaṁ* celibacy अहिंसा *ahiṁsā* non-injury च *ca* and शारीरम् *śārīraṁ* of the body तपः *tapaḥ* austerity उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**Worship of the Gods, of the twice-born, of teachers and of the wise; purity, uprightness, continence and non-injury — these are said to be the austerity of the body. 14**

*Tapaḥ* means to melt. Useful metals are extracted by melting ores. Old and scrap metals are renewed by the same process of melting. The life of man can similarly be renewed and rejuvenated by *tapas* or austerity. It is a boon with which man is endowed so that he may reform and re-create himself into a higher order of existence. Blessed is that man who applies himself to this spiritual means so that he may emerge from manhood into godhood. Man is constituted of the body, the speech and the mind. When these three components are modified by *tapas*, man automatically changes for the better. The process of transformation is presented herein.

A mother who serves her baby expects no reward. She finds satisfaction in service. The good and the holy worship the Lord expecting nothing in return. This divine act is inherent in them. Again their adoration is quite in tune with the ordinance of the scriptures. All forms of *Yajna* resolve themselves into the adoration of the Almighty. The *Sāttvika* men are given to this kind of worship.

While the Pandava brothers were in exile this pertinent question was put to King Yudhishthira by Queen Draupati. "Why should these series of troubles and tribulations befall you who are an embodiment of dharma?" The reply bespeaks the mental calibre of the man concerned. "Behold, O Queen, the yonder majestic Himalayas. I can't help adoring them. Sorrow finds no quarters in my mind given to this adoration." Yudhishthira was made of such stuff as this. And this verily is the way of the *Sāttvika*.

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ १२

अभि-सम्-धा-य तु फलम् दम्भ-अर्थम् अपि च एव यत् ।
इज्(यज्)-यते भरत-श्रेष्ठ तम् यज्ञम् विद्धि राजसम् ॥

*abhisamdhāya tu phalam dambhārtham api cai 'va yat*
*ijyate bharataśreṣṭha tam yajñam viddhi rājasam* ||

अभिसंधाय *abhisamdhāya* seeking for तु *tu* indeed फलम् *phalam* fruit दम्भार्थम् *dambhārtham* for ostentation अपि *api* also च *ca* and एव *eva* even यत् *yat* which इज्यते *ijyate* is offered भरतश्रेष्ठ *bharata śreṣṭha* O best of

practice of the study of the Vedas च *ca* and एव *eva* also वाङ्मयम् *vāṅmayaṁ* of speech तपः *tapaḥ* austerity उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**The speech which causes no excitement, which is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and also the practice of sacred recitation — these are said to form the austerity of speech. 15**

The harm done through speech is often more painful than that caused by physical violence. Words of excitement and words that hurt people should by all means be avoided by the spiritual aspirant.

Truth is in some cases unpleasant to hear and untruth pleasant to hear. The best course is to present truth in as pleasant a way as possible. But there should be no deviation from truth for the sake of pleasantness. If it comes to it, even at the cost of pleasantness, truth alone should be ever upheld.

Flattery is often in tune with truthfulness and very pleasant to hear. May a *sadhaka* employ it in his dealings with people? No, flattery has to be scrupulously avoided. Harsh words have not done so much harm to society as undue compliments have done. Even great men have fallen victims to flattery and gone off their moorings. The words uttered ought to be pleasant and beneficial but never pandering to one's vanity. Beneficial words form a benediction, and they alone ought to be spoken always.

The Vedas are the oldest books known to humanity, and they are held the most sacred because of their dealing with matters spiritual. Chanting them daily with proper intonation is not only a perfect vocal

All good acts which are conducive to public welfare are emphatically enjoined in the Sastras. Therefore they may be all undertaken even without consulting the Sastras. But whatever act is harmful, it is prohibited by the scriptures which are the infallible guides. Therefore the Sastras necessarily come in for guidance whenever a doubt arises about the validity of an action.

Beings depend on food for their existence. Voluntary distribution of it is therefore a mark of consideration and regard for beings. Cherishing beings with food is a form of worship of the Almighty.

*Mantrās* are the external indications of the solemn determination and noble intents behind an action. An undertaking which is devoid of elevating ideas is more mechanical than human.

Reverent gifts are to be made to those who participate in a *Yajna* with an attitude of service. Gifts are also to be made to other deserving people and to good causes.

Above all if a holy undertaking be devoid of *sraddhā*, it is to be eschewed as vainglorious and demoniac The *Tamasika* type of people undertake *Yajnās* full of these defects.

Austerity is a holy means for the human to emerge into the divine. Its characteristics are mentioned in the following few stanzas :—

mind is self-control mentioned herein. What is in the mind expresses itself as words and actions. He who has mastery over his mind never utters an unwanted word and never does an undesirable action. When a person's temperament is congenial and attitude felicitous, he is said to be imbued with purity of disposition. Maintaining this benign state of mind under all circumstances is austerity of the mind.

श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः ।
अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ॥ १७

श्रद्धया परया तप्तम् तपः तत् त्रि-विधम् नरैः ।
अ-फल-आ-काङ्क्षिभिः युक्तैः सात्त्विकम् परि-चक्ष्-अते ॥

*śraddhayā parayā taptaṁ tapas tat trividhaṁ naraiḥ* ।
*aphalākāṅkṣibhir yuktaiḥ sāttvikaṁ paricakṣate* ॥

श्रद्धया *śraddhayā* with faith परया *parayā* highest तप्तम् *taptaṁ* practised तपः *tapaḥ* austerity तत् *tat* that त्रिविधम् *trividhaṁ* threefold नरैः *naraiḥ* by men अफल आकाङ्क्षिभिः *aphala ākāṅkṣibhiḥ* desiring no fruit युक्तैः *yuktaiḥ* steadfast सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikaṁ* Sattvika परिचक्षते *paricakṣate* (they) declare

**This threefold austerity practised by steadfast men with the utmost Sraddha, desiring no fruit, they call Sattvika. 17**

The austerity loses its sanctity to the extent fruit or reward is sought for. He is steadfast in the pursuit of the ideal, who remains unaffected by success and failure. Relentlessly he engages himself in his divine endeavours. All the three instruments — the body, the speech and the mind, are

The facets of Brahman such as Siva, Vishnu and Ambika are called Gods. They are recognized as Deities worthy of adoration. The *Brāhmanā* is called the twice-born because of his being born again mentally for a dedicated spiritual life. The teachers are they who set an example of spiritual life through their personal career. The wise are they who are awakened to *Brahmāvastha*; they have transcended the body-consciousness. By worshipping all these whole-heartedly, the aspirant gets himself cast in their divine moulds. Bodily purity is maintained by regular baths and clean clothing. It is uprightness to execute all bodily activities in a clean, open and ethical way. When all sense-indulgences in general, and sex-indulgence in particular are eschewed and the body is dedicated only to the service of the divine, it is acclaimed as continence. Recognizing the sacredness of all beings and refraining from hurting any of them is non-injury. All these sacred observances put together are called bodily austerity.

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥ १५

अन्-उद्वेग-करम् वाक्यम् सत्यम् प्रिय-हितम् च यत् ।
स्व-अध्याय-अभि-असनम् च एव वाक्-मयम् तपः उच्-यते ॥

*anudvegakaram vākyaṁ satyam priyahitaṁ ca yat* |
*svādhyāyābhyasanaṁ cai 'va vāṅmayam tapa ucyate* ||

अनुद्वेगकरम् *anudvegakaram* causing no excitement वाक्यम् *vākyaṁ* speech सत्यम् *satyam* truthful प्रियहितम् *priya hitam* pleasant and beneficial च *ca* and यत् *yat* which स्वाध्याय अभ्यसनम् *svādhyāya abhyasanam* the

gaining adoration from the public he has no other purpose for his austerity. There is no stability in it. After the glamour for it is over, he either suspends or puts an end to it. There is no spiritual value in this kind of *Rajasika* austerity.

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ १९

मूढ-ग्राहेण आत्मनः यत् पीडया क्रियते तपः ।
परस्य उद्-सादन-अर्थम् वा तत् तामसम् उद्-आ-हृतम् ॥

*mūḍhagrāheṇā 'tmano yat pīḍayā kriyate tapaḥ* ।
*parasyo 'tsādanārthaṁ vā tat tāmasam udāhṛtam* ॥

मूढग्राहेण *mūḍha grāheṇa* out of a foolish notion आत्मनः *ātmanaḥ* of the self यत् *yat* which पीडया *pīḍayā* with torture क्रियते *kriyate* is practised तपः *tapaḥ* austerity परस्य *parasya* of another उत्सादन अर्थम् *utsādana arthaṁ* for the purpose of destroying वा *vā* or तत् *tat* that तामसम् *tāmasaṁ* Tamasika उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtaṁ* is declared

**That austerity which is practised with a foolish obstinacy, with self-torture or for the purpose of destroying another, is declared to be Tamasika. 19**

Among human beings there are individuals resembling stones and blocks. Their intellectual development is yet incomplete. Ideals in life are imperfectly understood by them. Such dullards also, often take to the practice of austerity without knowing its scope. They fast to the point of self-immolation, expose themselves to the heat of sun and fire and dip themselves in cold water to benumb their sense-organs. Instead of outgrowing the body-

training, but it is also a sanctifying agency to the student This book, however, is not within the reach of all Fortunately for man, however, there are sacred books in all languages A devotional reading or chanting of them daily forms an aspect of spiritual discipline.

All the four phases of training the tongue dilated herein, put together form the austerity of speech

मनः प्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥ १६

मन प्रसाद सौम्य-त्वम् मौनम् आत्म(न्)-विनि-ग्रह ।
भाव-सम्-शुद्धि इति एतत् तप मानसम् उच्यते ॥

*manahprasādah saumyatvam maunam ātmavinigrahah* ।
*bhāvasamśuddhir ity etat tapo mānasam ucyate* ॥

मन प्रसाद *manah prasādah* serenity of mind सौम्यत्वम् *saumyatvam* good heartedness मौनम् *maunam* silence आत्मविनिग्रह *ātma vinigrahah* self-control भावसशुद्धिः *bhāva samśuddhih* purity of nature इति *iti* thus एतत् *etat* this तप *tapah* austerity मानसम् *mānasam* mental उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of disposition — this is called the mental austerity. 16**

Eschewing depression and confusion and being established in a blissful calmness is serenity of mind. Being kindly disposed towards all is gentleness Keeping all mentation in a state of equilibrium is silence Control of the mind is superior to the control of the tongue and the body. Permitting pure thoughts and noble emotions alone to crop up in the

same time he is worthy of the gift and whatever is given to him would be well spent on worthy causes. The attitude of the giver is more important than the gift itself. With the sense of a sacred duty the bestowing ought to be made. In humility, with bashfulness and to the best of one's ability, the means at one's disposal ought to be shared with the deserving people. To a person residing in one region, a gift made in another distant region is not one given at the right place. The gift ought to be made just when there is the need for it. Early or belated offering becomes untimely and purposeless. That gift is *Sāttvika* which fulfils all these conditions.

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ २१

यत् तु प्रति-उप-कार-अर्थम् फलम् उद्-दिश्-य वा पुनः ।
(दा)दी-य-ते च परि-क्लिश्टम् तत दानम् राजसम् स्मृ-तम् ॥

*yat tu pratyupakārārthaṁ phalam uddiśya vā punaḥ |*
*dīyate ca parikliṣṭaṁ tad dānaṁ rājasaṁ smṛtam ||*

यत् *yat* which तु *tu* indeed प्रत्युपकारार्थम् *pratyupakārārthaṁ* with a view to receive in return फलम् *phalaṁ* fruit उद्दिश्य *uddiśya* looking for वा *vā* or पुनः *punaḥ* again दीयते *dīyate* is given च *ca* and परिक्लिष्टम् *parikliṣṭaṁ* reluctantly तत् *tat* that दानम् *dānaṁ* gift राजसम् *rājasaṁ* Rajasika स्मृतम् *smṛtaṁ* is held to be

**And that gift which is given with a view to receive in return, or looking for the fruit, or again grudgingly, is accounted as Rajasika. 21**

Let not the left hand know what the right hand gifts, is the injunction. The idea is that there is

*benignly utilized for the service of the Lord.* That aspirant is fixed in *Sāttvika* who expects no reward and who does not suspend his practice of austerity for any reason whatsoever.

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् ।
क्रियते तदिह-प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् ॥ १८

सत्कार-मान-पूजा-अर्थम् तप. दम्भेन च एव यत् ।
क्रि-यते तत् इह प्र-उक्तम् राजसम् चलम् अ-ध्रुवम् ॥

*satkāra māna pūjārtham tapo dambhena cai 'va yat* ।
*kriyate tad iha proktam rājasam calam adhruvam* ॥

सत्कारमानपूजा अर्थम् *satkāra māna pūjā artham* with the object of gaining good reception, honour and worship तप: *tapaḥ* austerity दम्भेन *dambhena* with hypocrisy च *ca* and एव *eva* even यत् *yat* which क्रियते *kriyate* is practised तत् *tat* that इह *iha* here प्रोक्तम् *proktam* is said राजसम् *rājasam* Rajasika चलम् *calam* unstable अध्रुवम् *adhruvam* transitory

**The austerity which is practised with the object of gaining respect, honour and reverence, and with ostentation is here said to be Rajasika; it is unstable and transitory. 18**

The *Rajasika* man does not understand that austerity is the effective means to recast his base nature into benign. As children play at imitating the actualities in life, this man imitates *tapas* for mere show. He expects the others to esteem him as a man of austerity. The way of the world is to hold a holy man in great regard. The *Rajasika* man avails himself of that credulity in society and poses as a man given to severe spiritual discipline. Apart from

they who are of questionable character, who are devoid of self-control, who do not engage themselves in the welfare of beings and who squander away money. When the recipients are received disrespectfully and insolently and when the doling out is made with abuses and scoldings — it is *Tamasika* gift.

The contributions made to public causes due to the pressure from government officers, are *Tamasika* in nature. Bribes very often put on the garb of voluntary contribution for good causes. They are also base in nature.

*Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas* are the holiest of all karmas; but even they have a tinge of evil inherent in them. How are these evils to be rectified? The answer comes :—

**Demerits Turned into Merits — 23–28**

**ओं तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।**
**ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥ २३**

ओम् तत् सत् इति निर्-देशः ब्रह्मणः त्रि-विधः स्मृ-तः ।
ब्राह्मणाः तेन वेदाः च यज्ञाः च वि-(धा)हि-ताः पुरा ॥

*aum tat sad iti nirdeśo brahmaṇas trividhaḥ smṛtaḥ* ।
*brāhmaṇās tena vedāś ca yajñāś ca vihitāḥ purā* ॥

ॐ तत्सत् *om tat sat* Om Tat Sat इति *iti* thus निर्देशः *nirdeśaḥ* designation ब्रह्मणः *brahmaṇaḥ* of Brahman त्रिविधः *trividhaḥ* threefold स्मृतः *smṛtaḥ* has been declared ब्राह्मणाः *brāhmaṇāḥ* Brahmanas तेन *tena* by that वेदाः *vedāḥ* Vedas च *ca* and यज्ञाः *yajñāḥ* sacrifices च *ca* and विहिताः *vihitāḥ* created पुरा *purā* formerly

consciousness in *ātmabodha*, they are body-centered and torture it religiously Occasionally they stumble upon some psychic power which they utilize for hurting, wrecking or destroying others These men are *Tamasika* in their performance of austerity.

The Threefold Gift — 20-22

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥ २०

दा-तव्यम् इति यत् दानम् (दा)दी-यते अन्-उप-कारिणे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तत् दानम् सात्त्विकम् स्मृ-तम् ॥

*dātavyam iti yad dānam dīyate 'nupakārine* ।
*deśe kāle ca pātre ca tad dānam sāttvikam smṛtam* ॥

दातव्यम् *dātavyam* ought to be given इति *iti* thus यत् *yat* that दानम् *dānam* gift दीयते *dīyate* is given अनुपकारिणे *anupakārine* to one who does no service in return देशे *deśe* in a fit place काले *kāle* in time च *ca* and पात्रे *pātre* to a worthy person च *ca* and तत् *tat* that दानम् *dānam* gift सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikam* Sattvika स्मृतम् *smṛtam* is held to be

**That gift which is made to one who can make no return, with the feeling that it is one's duty to give, and which is given at the right place and time and to a worthy person, that gift is held Sattvika. 20**

What is given expecting a return contribution or reward is no gift It is only an exchange of courtesy or hospitality. In some cases it happens to be a motivated investment But a gift is that which is voluntarily offered expecting nothing in return. The recipient is necessarily a person who is not in a position to make a return gift. At the

And how is this triple designation utilized? The answer comes:—

तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥ २४

तस्मात् ओम् इति उद्-आ-हृ-त्-य यज्ञ-दान-तपः क्रियाः ।
प्र-वर्तन्ते वि-धान-उक्ताः सततम् ब्रह्म-वादिनाम् ॥

*tasmād aum ity udāhṛtya yajña dāna tapaḥ kriyāḥ* ।
*pravartante vidhānoktāḥ satatam brahmavādinām* ॥

तस्मात् *tasmāt* therefore ॐ *om* Om इति *iti* thus उदाहृत्य *udāhṛtya* uttering यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः *yajña dāna tapaḥ kriyāḥ* the acts of sacrifice, gifts and austerity प्रवर्तन्ते *pravartante* begun विधान उक्ताः *vidhāna uktāḥ* as enjoined in the scriptures सततम् *satatam* always ब्रह्मवादिनाम् *brahma vādinām* by the students of Brahman

**Therefore, with the utterance of "Om," are the acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, as enjoined in the scriptures, always undertaken by the followers of the Vedas. 24**

There is no karma which is all perfect. For that reason no karma can be dropped out. Any attempt made by the embodied to eschew karma proves futile. A karma is therefore commenced with the utterance, "Om" in order to eradicate the evil in it. The implication is that every karma ought to be in accordance with the plan of Nature. There is a divine orderliness in the working of Nature; and it aids the evolution of the *Jivatman*. Every karma done by man ought to aid this divine purpose. This principle has, in course of time, modified itself into the worship of Ganesa, who is also known as

sanctity in the gifts made without publicity. But the *Rajasika* man is more concerned with publicity than with sanctity. Actually he has no mind to part with his possessions. With compunction and disquietude he gives away a niggardly dole. Even while doing so he grumbles at people choosing to exploit him. He plans of regaining his stinted gift, multiplied if possible. The *Rajasika* gift causes discomfort both to the giver and the receiver.

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २२

अ-देश-काले यत् दानम् अपात्रेभ्यः च (दा)दी-यते ।
अ-सत्कृतम् अव ज्ञातम् तत् तामसम् उद्-आ-हृ-तम् ॥

*adeśakāle yad dānam apātrebhyaś ca dīyate* ।
*asatkṛtam avajñātam tat tāmasam udāhṛtam* ॥

अदेशकाले *adeśa kāle* at a wrong place and time यत् *yat* that दानम् *dānam* gift अपात्रेभ्यः *apātrebhyaḥ* to unworthy persons च *ca* and दीयते *dīyate* is given असत्कृतम् *asatkṛtaṁ* without respect अवज्ञातम् *avajñātaṁ* with insult तत् *tat* that तामसम् *tāmasam* Tamasika उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtaṁ* is declared to be

**The gift that is given at a wrong place or time, to unworthy persons, without respect or with insult, that is declared to be Tamasika.** **22**

A wrong place is that which is dirty, full of disadvantages and uncongenial for residence. A wrong time is that which is set apart for sleep, toilet, personal concerns and for unavoidable obligatory activities. Those are not the times suited to make gifts. Persons unworthy of charity and gifts are

plan. He who submits himself as an instrument in the hands of the Lord and carries on a deadly and disastrous war commits no sin. Freed from agency as he is, he realizes that all actions belong to the Lord. While engaging himself in *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas*, the *sadhaka* is firm in the thought that the Lord is getting His work done. Such a one attains Brahmanhood, which is *Moksha*.

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥ २६

सद्-भावे साधु-भावे च सद् इति एतत् प्र-युज्-य-ते ।
प्र-शस्-ते कर्मणि तथा सद्-शब्दः पार्थ युज्-यते ॥

*sadbhāve sādhubhāve ca sad ity etat prayujyate* ।
*praśaste karmaṇi tathā sacchabdaḥ pārtha yujyate* ॥

सद्भावे *sadbhāve* in the sense of reality साधुभावे *sādhubhāve* in the sense of goodness च *ca* and सत् *sat* Sat इति *iti* thus एतत् *etat* this प्रयुज्यते *prayujyate* is used प्रशस्ते *praśaste* auspicious कर्मणि *karmaṇi* in (the sense of) an act तथा *tathā* so also सत् *sat* Sat शब्दः *śabdaḥ* word पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha युज्यते *yujyate* is used

**The word "Sat" is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and so also, O Partha, the word "Sat" is used in the sense of an auspicious act. 26**

Brahman alone is "Sat" and not the *Jivatman*. Still when a son is born, he is blessed to be ever living. In the worldly parlance, calling the *asat* as "Sat" is customary.

Brahman alone is free from blemish. Everything else has some trace of evil in it. The sinful man ought not to be addressed as sinner. For, by

**"Om Tat Sat," this has been declared to be the triple designation of Brahman. By that were made of old the Brahmanas, the Vedas and the Yajnas. 23**

Every time a necessity arises for the indication of Brahman, these three words, Om Tat Sat are utilized either together or severally. Brahman projects Himself as sound for the purpose of manifesting Himself as the phenomenal universe. The sum total of the sound of the Cosmos is Om. It is otherwise called *Nāda Brahman.* This sacred sound is interminable. Brahman is referred to by the utterance of Om. He is also indicated by the word Tat which means It. A respectable person is not referred to by his name but with the simple word 'he.' In such deference, Brahman is indicated with the word 'It'. Again Sat means the Reality, which remains unaffected by time, space and causation. Brahman is also referred to as Sat. This triple designation therefore always indicates Brahman.

Though both butter and buttermilk come from the same substance, milk, we only say that butter comes from milk and make no mention of the other substance. Though all things and beings have come out from Brahman, the most prominent productions among them are the *Brāhmanās*, the *Vedās* and the *Yajñās*. The most evolved and the most spiritually inclined ones among men are called the *Brāhmanās*. Among the branches of knowledge, the sublimest are contained in the *Vedās*. And among the activities going on in the world, the most elevating and beneficial ones are the *Yajñās*. In the *Nāda Brahman* these three occupy the foremost place.

in connection with these or for the sake of the supreme सत् *sat* Sat इति *iti* thus एव *eva* even अभिधीयते *abhidhīyate* is called

**Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and gift is also called "Sat" and action for the sake of the Lord is also called "Sat."** 27

In stanza twentyfive the performance of *Yajna, dāna* and *tapas* is dominated by the thought of "Tat." Here the performance of the same three sacred acts is dominated by the thought of "Sat." And there is a slight difference between these two doings. The former is actuated by the urge for *Moksha* or liberation. The intensity of the feeling is at a high pitch in it. The means and the end therefore get merged into one. The *Brahmāvastha* is in evidence at the very beginning of the *sādhana*. Whereas in the latter which is "Sat" *bhāva* the progress is slow but steady.

When *Yajna, dāna* and *tapas* are performed properly they naturally come under the category of "Sat" in which the means and the end are not the same, although the means requires to be given the importance attached to the end. This may be clarified through an example. Scaffolding is necessary for constructing high buildings. The former is temporary and the latter permanent. The former is the means and the latter, the end. Attention is to be given to the means as much as to the end. The attitude of "Sat" is bestowed to the means and the end alike. *Yajna, dāna* and *tapas* are the means; Godhead is the end. The ardent *sadhaka*

Vigneswara or the Lord who wards off obstacles. This Deity is the embodiment of "Om." As all sounds merge in "Om" all actions ought to be in harmony with the cosmic scheme. That karma alone is performed successfully which fulfils this condition. This is the infallible law governing the idea that a karma ought to be commenced after uttering "Om."

तदित्यनभिसंधाय फलं यज्ञतपः क्रियाः ।
दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥ २५

तत् इति अन्-अभि-सम् धा-य फलम् यज्ञ-तपः क्रियाः ।
दान-क्रियाः च वि-विधाः क्रि-यन्ते मोक्ष-काङ्क्षिभिः ॥

*tad ity anabhisaṁdhāya phalaṁ yajña tapaḥ kriyāḥ* ।
*dāna kriyāś ca vividhāḥ kriyante mokṣakāṅkṣibhiḥ* ॥

तत् *tat* that इति *iti* thus अनभिसंधाय *anabhisamdhāya* without aiming at फलम् *phalaṁ* fruit यज्ञतपःक्रियाः *yajña tapaḥ kriyāḥ* acts of sacrifice and austerity दानक्रियाः *dāna kriyāḥ* acts of gift च *ca* and विविधाः *vividhāḥ* various क्रियन्ते *kriyante* are performed मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः *mokṣa kāṅkṣibhiḥ* by the seekers of liberation

**Uttering "Tat" without aiming at the fruits, are the acts of sacrifice and austerity and the various acts of gift performed by the seekers of Moksha. 25**

The word "Tat" refers to Brahman. All actions belong to Iswara and not to the individual souls. Therefore, while undertaking a karma, the thought should be invoked that it belongs to Brahman. Even the best of the actions, done for oneself, begets evil. But even the worst of the actions, like a warfare, waged for the service of the Lord, is freed from all sins. And war has its inevitable place in the cosmic

that प्रेत्य *pretya* hereafter (after death) न *na* not इह *iha* here

**Whatever is sacrificed, given or performed and whatever austerity is practised without Sraddha, it is called Asat, O Partha. It is of no account here or hereafter. 28**

*Yajna, dāna* and *tapas* when performed well lead the *sadhaka* into God-consciousness. Correspondingly his individualistic consciousness is eliminated. But if these good acts be done with selfish motive, the man's individualism develops, promoting his enjoyment of earthly pleasures. *Sraddhā* is indispensable for the enjoyment of either the divine plenitude or the earthly joys. But he who lacks in *Sraddhā* enjoys neither the here nor the hereafter.

Machines make no progress for themselves through their working; they merely wear out. The man without *Sraddhā* becomes an automaton or machine. But he alone progresses in life who is full of *Sraddhā*. Getting educated and earning money are among the earthly activities of man. If he be devoid of *Sraddhā* he remains alien to these accomplishments. If wealth be placed at the disposal of a man bereft of *Sraddhā* he would squander it in no time. Hence *Sraddhā* is the one divine gift endowed with which man makes progress both in his earthly life and in his spiritual pilgrimage. Whatever duty falls to his lot in his endeavours to gain the here and hereafter, he is to execute it with *Sraddhā*. Defective as each duty is with one blemish or another, it may

doing so the sin in him is further cherished. But by calling him good at all times, the goodness in him is fostered The attitude of goodness is an effective means to reform the world. This is a great lesson in life to be learnt by all. The word "Sat" is used for this purpose.

The word "Sat" is used in benediction, approbation and sanction. The discerning ones know for certain that marriage is the cause of the downfall of man. It is an inauspicious act in life. Still it is sanctioned and approbated as an auspicious act. The word "Sat" is used in this respect.

Worldly life is ever wrought with evil. On that ground man should not be always harping on the bad. Neither should he assume a pessimistic attitude. There should always be the attempt to make the best of the existing evil. For this purpose also the word "Sat" is used.

Are there any other purposes for which the word "Sat" is used? The answer ensues .—

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥ २७

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थि(स्था)ति सत् इति च उच्यते ।
कर्म च एव तद्-अर्थीयम् सत् इति एव अभि-(धा)धी-यते ॥

*yajñe tapasi dāne ca sthitiḥ sad iti co 'cyate* ।
*karma cai 'va tadarthīyam sad ity evā 'bhidhīyate* ॥

यज्ञे *yajñe* in sacrifice तपसि *tapasi* in austerity दाने *dāne* in gift च *ca* and स्थितिः *sthitiḥ* steadiness सत् *sat* Sat इति *iti* thus च *ca* and उच्यते *ucyate* is called कर्म *karma* action च *ca* and एव *eva* also तदर्थीयम् *tadarthīyam*

# मोक्षसंन्यासयोगः

## MOKSHA SANYASA YOGA

## THE YOGA OF LIBERATION BY RENUNCIATION

## CHAPTER XVIII

Sanyasa and Tyaga Explained — Tamasika and Rajasika Tyagas are Purposeless — Tyaga of Sattvika Nature is Indispensable — The Components of Karma — Atman is Inaction — The Three Gunas give Impetus to Karma — The Fourfold Caste Explained — Karma Yoga is Karma Sanyasa — Egoism is Harmful — All Karma belongs to Iswara — Freedom of Enquiry into Truth — The Category of Self-surrender — Competency for Following the Gita — The Dawn of Knowledge — Sanjaya's Conclusive Statement.

**Sanyasa and Tyaga Explained — 1-6**

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।
त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥ १

सम्-नि-आसस्य महाबाहो तद्-त्वम् इच्छामि वेदितुम् ।
त्यागस्य च हृषीक-ईश पृथक् केशि-निषूदन ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*saṁnyāsasya mahābāho tattvaṁ icchāmi veditum* ।
*tyāgasya ca hṛṣīkeśa pṛthak keśiniṣūdana* ॥

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

संन्यासस्य *saṁnyāsasya* of renunciation महाबाहो *mahā bāho* O mighty-armed तत्त्वम् *tattvaṁ* the truth इच्छामि *icchāmi* (I) wish वेदितुम् *veditum* to know त्यागस्य *tyāgasya* of Tyaga च *ca* and हृषीकेश *hṛṣīkeśa* O Hrishikesa पृथक् *pṛthak* severally केशिनिषूदन *keśiniṣūdana* slayer of Kesi

**Arjuna said:**

**I desire to know severally, O mighty-armed, the truth of Sanyasa, O Hrishikesa, as also of Tyaga, O slayer of Kesi.** **1**

is all attention and all steadfastness in the discharge of these holy acts. He does not mind the end being very remote. His attitude towards the means — sacrifice, austerity and gift — is "Sat."

Adoption of a wrong method because of ignorance to a right end is also "Sat" for the simple reason the end is great. Godhood is the goal to a *sadhaka*; he follows a wrong path to begin with. Even that wrong path is "Sat" because it is bound to get rectified. An example clarifies this point. A pilgrim to a northern sacred place chooses to walk southward, not knowing the right path. In this situation somebody comes in to put him on the right path. Because of the good intention of the pilgrim, even the wrong road that he has chosen is "Sat." Whatever action one takes for the sake of the Lord is "Sat." Good karma done for selfish ends is "*asat.*" Even bad karma done for the glory of the Lord is "Sat."

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥ २८

अ-श्रद्धया हु-तम् (दा) दद्-तम् तप. तप्-तम् कृ-तम् च यत् ।
अ-सद् इति उच्यते पार्थ न च तद् प्र-इ-त्-य नो इह ॥

*aśraddhayā hutam dattam tapas taptam kṛtam ca yat* ।
*asad ity ucyate pārtha na ca tat pretya no iha* ॥

अश्रद्धया *aśraddhayā* without faith हुतम् *hutaṁ* is sacrificed दत्तम् *dattaṁ* given तप: *tapaḥ* austerity तप्तम् *taptam* is practised कृतम् *kṛtam* performed च *ca* and यत् *yat* whatever असत् *asat* Asat इति *iti* thus उच्यते *ucyate* is called पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha न *na* not च *ca* and तत् *tat*

all contained in these three significant epithets. Encountering and vanquishing of the demon is a cosmic function and so a necessity. Every creature in the universe has enemies to encounter, dangers to life and evils to conquer; and all of them are compelled to undergo training for their conquest. Acquisition of strength is the reward for living earthly life with a purpose. The strong ones thrive while the weaklings are exterminated. Man is to make himself strong physically and also to avail himself of all the weapons of offence and defence that can be got from Nature. This is the message contained in Sri Krishna being the slayer of Kesi and in His being the mighty-armed. Finally man has to conquer his senses and the mind. This is the greatest of all conquests. It is by subduing the senses and the mind that man evolves from the human to the divine. The Lord delivers this message, Himself being Hrishikesa — the lord of the senses. He embodies the perfection attainable to the aspirant.

In chapter five stanza thirteen and in chapter nine stanza twenty eight the Lord made reference to *Sanyāsa*.

In chapter four stanza twenty and in chapter twelve stanza eleven He made mention of *Tyāga*.

These two spiritual practices require to be clarified and differentiated. This is the purport of the question raised by Arjuna. The Lord of yoga can authoritatively answer this question.

all be overcome by uttering "*Om Tat Sat*" at the commencement of every undertaking and by attuning the mind to the ideal conveyed by this triple designation of Brahman This indeed is the means to attain the Supreme

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम
सप्तदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde śraddhātraya vibhāga yogo nāma saptadaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the seventeenth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF THE THREEFOLD SRADDHA



that it is *Tyāga* to abandon the fruits of all actions such as *nitya* or obligatory ones, *naimitya* or the occasional specific ones and *kāmya* or the optional work. *Kāmya karmās* are those that create new bondages leading to rebirths for the fulfilment of desires that prompted those actions. Seeds for further transmigrations should not be sown by those aspirants who are intent on gaining liberation. When the fruits of the various works are not cared for, that attitude is *Tyāga*, which prepares the *sadhaka* for emancipation. This is the view of a second set of sages.

The aspirants endowed with *sattva guna* need not do any karma. In fact, all activities drop off from them, of their own accord. Any endeavour on their part to retain karma proves itself futile. The Lord Himself releases them from all duties. The domestic activities of a pregnant young woman are reduced as her pregnancy advances. After delivery she has no work except looking after the babe. Such is the case with those imbued with *sattva*. But the others who are not *sattvikas* should necessarily engage themselves in their allotted duties. As the servant of a rich man does the work assigned to him, the devotees of the Lord should discharge their duties, holding them all as the Maker's mandate. The Lord's name ought to be repeated mentally while the activities are going on at the physical level. At the appointed times meditation on the Lord may also be carried on. This is the gist of the Karma yoga.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।
यज्ञदानतपः कर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥ ३

त्याज्यम् दोष-वद् इति एके कर्म प्र-आहुः मनीषिणः ।
यज्ञ-दान-तपः-कर्म न त्याज्यम् इति च अपरे ॥

These truths have not been left unexplained, what have been enunciated already are recapitulated for clarification The early part of this chapter therefore, deals with the harmonization of all the yogas It is possible to present the same principle in different forms, in a different setting It may even seem a new theme because of the variation of the context Truth permits itself to be presented in a variety of patterns, and each pattern provides an appeal of its own Each limb of an elephant leaves *its special impress on the observer's mind* This majestic animal again, creates a comprehensive impress on its beholder The position of the Bhagavad Gita is very much like this Each chapter in it is designated as a particular yoga While the book as a whole is considered as Yoga Sastra, the eighteenth chapter is regarded as its synopsis

Kesi was an Asura who assumed the form of a horse and encountered Sri Krishna, intent on swallowing Him up But this Superhuman Being thrust His arm into the stomach of the demon, squeezed his bowels into a paste and did away with him Because of this deed of valour He is extolled as *Kesinishudana* *His arms being the sinews of war, He is esteemed as Mahābāhuḥ* or the mighty armed In the midst of these deeds of valour, He was ever the master of the senses He is therefore praised as Hrishikesa

There is an implied purpose in Arjuna's addressing Him as the lord of the senses, as the mighty-armed and as the slayer of Kesi The process of the evolution of beings from the low to the high is

A fourth group of sages is in favour of persisting in the performance of *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas* even though they are fraught with evil. The plea of these wise men is that the evil of mundane life cannot be eradicated completely. Let life be accepted therefore for what it is worth. As much good as possible may be derived even from this defective existence. The rose is amid of thorns; but on that ground the raising of roses should not be suspended. Poison is bad no doubt; but a beneficial medicine may be extracted even from that deadly stuff. Karma is undoubtedly an evil. It binds man in bondage to Prakriti and to the wheel of birth and death. Still, by converting karma into the acts of *Yajna, dāna* and *tapas*, maximum good may be extracted from it. These meritorious acts ought not to be abandoned, is the view of these great ones.

But what is the view of the Lord in this respect? The elucidation comes:—

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तितः ॥ ४

निस्-चयम् श्रुणु (शृणु) मे तत्र त्यागे भरत-सत्तम ।
त्यागः हि पुरुष-व्याघ्र त्रि-विधः सम्-प्र-कीर्तितः ॥

*niścayaṁ śṛṇu me tatra tyāge bharata sattama* |
*tyāgo hi puruṣa vyāghra trividhaḥ saṁprakīrtitaḥ* ||

निश्चयम *niścayaṁ* conclusion शृणु *śṛṇu* hear मे *me* my तत्र *tatra* there त्यागे *tyāge* about abandonment भरतसत्तम *bharata sattama* O best of the Bharatas त्यागः *tyāgaḥ* abandonment हि *hi* verily पुरुषव्याघ्र *puruṣa vyāghra* O best of men त्रिविधः *trividhaḥ* of three kinds संप्रकीर्तितः *saṁprakīrtitaḥ* has been declared

श्री भगवानुवाच

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥ २

काम्यानाम् कर्मणाम् नि-आसम् सम्-नि-आसम् कवय. विद्-उ ।
सर्व-कर्म-फल-त्यागम् प्र आहु त्यागम् विचक्षणाः ॥

*śrı bhagavān uvāca*

*kāmyānām karmanām nyāsam*
*samnyāsam kavayo viduḥ* ।
*sarva karma phala tyāgam prāhus*
*tyāgam vıcaksanāḥ* ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca* Srı Bhagavan said :

काम्यानाम् *kāmyānām* desireful कर्मणाम् *karmanām* of actions न्यासम् *nyāsam* the renunciation सन्यासम् *samnyāsam* renunciation कवय: *kavayaḥ* the sages विदु. *viduḥ* understand सर्वकर्मफलत्यागम् *sarva karma phala tyāgam* the abandonment of the fruits of all works प्राहु. *prāhuḥ* declare त्यागम् *tyāgam* abandonment विचक्षणा. *vıcakṣanāḥ* the wise

**The Blessed Lord said**

**The renunciation of kamya karma, the sages understand as Sanyasa; the wise declare the abandonment of the fruits of all works as Tyaga. 2**

*Kāmya karma* requires to be clarified Hankering after health, wealth, long life, progeny, name, fame, title and social status — all these come under *kāmya karma.* Under this category comes also the hope for various heavenly enjoyments after death. That it is *Sanyāsa* to renounce all these desires, is the view of some sages. There are others who acclaim

and then to renounce it so that he may fulfil himself by union with the Paramatman. And this is the acme of renunciation towards which beings are knowingly or unknowingly wending their way. It is the yogi who hastens the progress while the others are lingering in the wilderness of the Prakriti.

The goal of the *Jivatman* is to be emancipated from Prakriti which expresses itself in the form of karma. But he cannot and should not violently snatch himself away from karma. There is a natural and delightful way of transcending karma; the process is presented as follows :—

यज्ञदानतपः कर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥ ५

यज्ञ-दान-तपः-कर्म न त्याज्यम् कार्यम् एव तत् ।
यज्ञः दानम् तपः च एव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥

*yajña dāna tapaḥ karma na tyājyaṁ kāryam eva tat ।*
*yajño dānaṁ tapaś cai 'va pāvanāni manīṣiṇām ॥*

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म *yajña dāna tapaḥ karma* acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity न *na* not त्याज्यम् *tyājyaṁ* should be abandoned कार्यम् *kāryaṁ* should be performed एव *eva* indeed तत् *tat* that यज्ञः *yajñaḥ* sacrifice दानम् *dānaṁ* gift तपः *tapaḥ* austerity च *ca* and एव *eva* indeed पावनानि *pāvanāni* purifiers मनीषिणाम् *manīṣiṇāṁ* of the wise

**Acts of Yajna, gift and austerity should not be given up, but should be performed; Yajna, gift and austerity are purifying to the wise. 5**

The silkworm builds a cocoon for its further development and evolution. But it gets itself encaged

*tyājyaṃ doṣavad ity eke karma prāhur manīṣiṇaḥ* ।
*yajña dāna tapaḥ karma na tyājyam iti cā 'pare* ॥

त्याज्यम् *tyājyam* should be abandoned दोषवत् *doṣa vat* as an evil इति *iti* thus एके *eke* some कर्म *karma* action प्राहुः *prāhuḥ* declare मनीषिणः *manīṣiṇaḥ* philosophers यज्ञदानतपः कर्म *yajña dāna tapaḥ karma* acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity न *na* not त्याज्यम् *tyājyam* should be relinquished इति *iti* thus च *ca* and अपरे *apare* others

**Some sages declare that all action should be relinquished as evil, while others say that Yajna, gift and austerity should not be relinquished.** 3

Cause and effect are contained in karma in all of its forms The effect is inevitable when the cause is set in motion When it rains, the farm and a house under construction alike get wet The effect *is good to the former and bad to the latter* Cause here in the form of rain has both good and bad effects on two different things The burning of a lamp which is the cause, produces a good effect for a reader of the Bhagavad Gita and a bad effect on the insects that fall in the flame and perish In man's maintaining his life, there is the good effect of his dedicating it to the adoration of God and the bad effect of his consuming other lives as food Evil is thus inherent in all actions A third set of sages who take note of the evils contained in karma, advocate its complete abandonment They are for liquidating mundane life as quickly as possible Some go to the extent of enforcing slow suicide with the noble intention of not adding to the existing evil

एतानि अपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गम् त्यक्-त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्-तव्यानि इति मे पार्थ निस्-चि-तम् म(न्)तम् उत्तमम् ॥

*etāny api tu karmāṇi saṅgaṁ tyaktvā phalāni ca* ।
*kartavyānī 'ti me pārtha niścitaṁ matam uttamam* ॥

एतानि *etāni* these अपि *api* even तु *tu* but कर्माणि *karmāṇi* actions सङ्गम् *saṅgaṁ* attachment त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* leaving फलानि *phalāni* fruits च *ca* and कर्तव्यानि *kartavyāni* should be performed इति *iti* thus मे *me* my पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha निश्चितम् *niścitaṁ* certain मतम् *mataṁ* belief उत्तमम् *uttamaṁ* best

**But even these actions should be performed giving up attachment and the fruits, O Partha; this is My certain and best belief.** 6

The mother produces milk in her breast and suckles the baby. She willingly abandons sleep and rest to serve her baby. The cow produces milk in her udder and yields it to the calf and to people. These acts of the mother and the cow are selfless as well as sacred. Rudiments of sacrifice, gift and austerity are found in them. The wise among men are expected to develop on these lines their acts of *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas*. They are boons to the giver as well as to the one who receives. That mind which grabs, shrinks. The other mind that gives, grows in plenitude. Life at the base level thrives by grabbing; life at the divine level fulfils itself by giving. The mother maintains her motherhood by ever giving to her child and never seeking anything from it. The cow is held sacred because of her gift. Man's height of glory is in the contribution that he makes and not in the wealth that he amasses. The wise men main-

**Learn from Me the truth about this abandonment, O best of the Bharatas; abandonment, verily, O best of men, has been declared to be of three kinds. 4**

The words *Sanyāsa* and *Tyāga* are synonyms Both the words mean abandonment, renunciation and the act of giving up It is not a negative process born of frustration and failure in life, as some would have it In renunciation there is fulfilment as well as acceptance It is an act of giving up the lower after one's concern with it is successfully over and embracing the higher with greater responsibility and keener application All good and purposeful acts in Nature are the acts of renunciation We shall presently see how they are so

Renunciation is both the key and the basis for higher life This principle is evinced by Nature at all levels of existence The sun is constantly giving up its heat and light, facilitating thereby the life process of beings in planets where they have made their appearance A ripe fruit renounces the parent tree that has been sustaining it, so that it may fulfil itself elsewhere by its intrinsic worth A mother fosters a babe in her womb as part and parcel of herself But she delivers it in time lest a delay in that act should prove dangerous both to herself and the babe This is an act of renunciation though we do not call it so A pupil has to renounce in time the school that has been educating him While availing himself of the benefits of that school, his aim is to get out of it successfully The aim of the *Jivatman* is to get himself educated in the school of Nature

To flower and fruit is the obligatory duty of a tree. And it lets off a fully matured fruit of its own accord. It is a natural abandonment. Contrary to this course, if an ignorant person plucks off an immature fruit, its purposes are foiled. Forced *Sanyāsa* from ignorance is as derogatory and destructive as this act.

*Nitya karma* or the obligatory duty varies in scale according to the attainments of man. Bathing, eating and earning wealth are acts of *nitya karma* to an ordinary man. *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas* are the obligatory duties of a spiritually advanced man. These sacred duties are to be discharged as long as the body lasts; for, the body and the duties done with it are inseparably connected. A rigid following of this principle adds to the purity of a pure man. Abandoning the obligatory duty through ignorance brings in deterioration. It enshrouds the man in greater ignorance. This unwise act is born of a *Tamasika* disposition.

A devotee ought to continue to utter the name of the Lord and to discharge his worldly duties until his mind gets merged in *Sat-chit-ananda*.

— Sri Ramakrishna

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्त्यजेत् ।
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥ ८

दुःखम् इति एव यत् कर्म काय - क्लेश - भयात् त्यजेत् ।
सः कृत्वा राजसम् त्यागम् न एव त्याग - फलम् लभेत् ॥

*duḥkham ity eva yat karma kāyakleśa bhayāt tyajet* ।
*sa kṛtvā rājasaṁ tyāgaṁ nai 'va tyāgaphalaṁ labhet* ॥

in the cocoon in order to bring about the required change. In the seeming imprisonment it transforms itself from the larva into a beautiful butterfly. At this stage it has to come out to enjoy light, air and open freedom. For this purpose it has to break open the cocoon built by itself. The act of breaking open the cocoon is as important as that of building it. Man's position in the world is exactly like that of the silkworm in the cocoon. The varieties of *kāmya karma* that he performs are for his self-education and self-preparation. By experience he comes to know at last of the limitations of the mundane life. An attitude of detachment from earthly existence develops in him as a matter of course. He gets fixed in the truth that his Home is in the Divine and that he is here in the mundane for mere schooling. The karma that he does after gaining in this conviction, transforms itself into *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas*. As the butterfly breaks through the cocoon it built, the *sadhaka* breaks through the shackles of the earthly life by his performance of sacrifice, gift and austerity. The world stands to gain thereby. The performer of these holy acts maintains his purity. Maximum good to all concerned emanates from these meritorious acts.

How do the wise men maintain their purity by performing these noble acts? The clarification comes :—

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥ ६

crossed his mind was not born of true discrimination. When *Rajas* overtakes a man, his understanding undergoes a corresponding distortion. A person of Arjuna's calibre bore evidence to this fact. It therefore fell to the lot of the Lord to cure him of this purposeless spirit of renunciation.

**Tyaga of Sattvika Nature is Indispensable — 9-12**

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥ ९

कार्यम् इति एव यत् कर्म नि-य(म्)-तम् क्रि-यते-अर्जुन ।
सङ्गम् त्यज्-त्वा फलम् च एव सः त्यागः सात्त्विकः मतः ॥

*kāryam ity eva yat karma niyataṁ kriyate 'rjuna ।*
*saṅgaṁ tyaktvā phalaṁ cai 'va sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ*

कार्यम् *kāryaṁ* ought to be done इति *iti* thus एव *eva* even यत् *yat* which कर्म *karma* action नियतम् *niyataṁ* obligatory क्रियते *kriyate* is performed अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna सङ्गम् *saṅgaṁ* attachment त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* abandoning फलम् *phalaṁ* fruits च *ca* and एव *eva* even सः *saḥ* that त्यागः *tyāgaḥ* abandonment सात्त्विकः *sāttvikaḥ* Sattvika मतः *mataḥ* is regarded

**Whatever obligatory work is done, O Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, abandoning attachment and also fruit, that abandonment is deemed to be Sattvika. 9**

The very performance of karma is abandoned both in the *Tamasika Tyāga* and *Rajasika Tyāga*. But such a suspension of work does not take place in the *Sāttvika Tyāga*. The execution of duty goes on unabated. All karmas, including the *nitya karma*,

tain their purity by their constant contribution in the form of *Yajna*, *dāna* and *tapas* These benign activities are as natural with them as subsisting is with lesser beings These sacred acts emanating from the holy ones have a purifying effect on givers and those who receive alike And these are the means to maintain the sanctity of the world This is the Law that governs life at the spiritual level Therefore, the Lord says that this is His certain and best belief

Those who want to make progress in spirituality and those who want to realize Iswara have to protect themselves first from base desires Attainment of perfection is impossible without purity of mind

— Sri Ramakrishna

**Tamasika and Rajasika Tyagas are Purposeless — 7 8**

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ ७

नि यतस्य तु सम् नि आस कर्मण न उप-पद् यते ।
मोहात् तस्य परि-त्याग तामस परि-कीर्तित ॥

*niyatasya tu samnyāsaḥ karmano no 'papadyate* ।
*mohāt tasya parityāgas tamasaḥ parikirtitaḥ* ॥

नियतस्य *niyatasya* obligatory तु *tu* verily सन्यास *samnyāsaḥ* renunciation कर्मण *karmanah* of action न *na* not उपपद्यते *upapadyate* is proper मोहात् *mohāt* from delusion तस्य *tasya* of the same परित्याग *parityāgah* abandonment तामस *tāmasah* Tamasika परिकीर्तित *pari kirtitaḥ* is declared

**Verily, the abandonment of any obligatory duty is not proper, such abandonment out of ignorance is declared to be Tamasika. 7**

How can it be known that this *sadhaka* is perfectly attuned to the right path of renunciation? The clarification comes :—

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ॥ १०

न द्वेष्टि अ-कुशलम् कर्म कुशले न अनु-सज्जते ।
त्यागी सत्त्व-सम्-आ-वि-श्-तः मेधा-वी छिद्-त-सम्-शयः ॥

*na dveṣṭy akuśalaṁ karma kuśale nā 'nuṣajjate* ।
*tyāgī sattvasamāviṣṭo medhāvī chinnasaṁśayaḥ* ॥

न *na* not द्वेष्टि *dveṣṭi* hates अकुशलम् *akuśalaṁ* disagreeable कर्म *karma* action कुशले *kuśale* to an agreeable one न *na* not अनुषज्जते *anuṣajjate* is attached त्यागी *tyāgī* the abandoner सत्त्वसमाविष्टः *sattva samāviṣṭaḥ* pervaded by purity मेधावी *medhāvī* intelligent छिन्नसंशयः *chinna saṁśayaḥ* with his doubts cut asunder

**The relinquisher imbued with Sattva and a steady understanding and with his doubts dispelled, hates not a disagreeable work nor is he attached to an agreeable one. 10**

The *sadhaka* fixed in *Sattva* has a clear mind. He sees things in their true perspective. Therefore he is one of a steady understanding—*medhāvī*. He sees Purusha and Prakriti just as they are. Karma and *akarma* do not create confusion in his mind. *Akarma* is characteristic of Atman or Purusha, who occupies the position of a clear mirror. No change whatsoever takes place in a mirror while reflecting objects or when ceasing to do so. The position of the Atman is akin to it. He is ever himself, both while karma has its course in His presence and when

दुःखम् *duḥkham* painful इति *iti* thus एव *eva* even यत् *yat* which कर्म *karma* action कायक्लेशभयात् *kāya kleśa bhayāt* from fear of bodily trouble त्यजेत् *tyajet* abandons सः *saḥ* he कृत्वा *kṛtvā* performing राजसम् *rājasam* Rajasika त्यागम् *tyāgam* abandonment न *na* not एव *eva* even त्यागफलम् *tyāga phalam* the fruit of abandonment लभेत् *labhet* obtains

**He who from fear of bodily trouble abandons action, because it is painful, thus performing a Rajasika abandonment, obtains not the fruit thereof. 8**

Earthly existence cannot be freed from bodily trouble Nothing great here can be obtained without taking pains If a pupil abandons his schooling on the ground it is painful, he does not derive the intellectual benefit obtained by one who subjects oneself to the taxing discipline imposed on one by that school The shirker would never become fit for higher education There are people who view worldly life as full of troubles and difficulties, and they are not prepared to face those ordeals Governed by an escape-mentality, they choose to embrace *Sanyāsa* and live a life of ease and comfort at the cost of the credulous people They do not obtain the supreme benefit of renunciation

Arjuna who came to the battle-field to wage a war of righteousness, was overwhelmed by a fit of *Rajasika* renunciation He thought it was not proper to incur the sin and the pain of killing his kith and kin His obligatory duty was to defend the cause of dharma and not that of his wicked relatives The thought of abandoning the righteous war which

न हि देह-भृता शक्यम् त्यक्तुम् कर्माणि अ-शेष-तः ।
यः तु कर्म-फल-त्यागी सः त्यागी इति अभि-धा-यते ॥

*na hi dehabhṛtā śakyaṁ tyaktuṁ karmāṇy aśeṣataḥ* ।
*yas tu karmaphala tyāgī sa tyāgī 'ty abhidhīyate* ॥

न *na* not हि *hi* verily देहभृता *dehabhṛtā* by an embodied being शक्यम् *śakyaṁ* possible त्यक्तुम् *tyaktuṁ* to abandon कर्माणि *karmāṇi* action अशेषतः *aśeṣataḥ* entirely यः *yaḥ* who तु *tu* but कर्मफलत्यागी *karma phala tyāgī* relinquisher of the fruits of actions सः *saḥ* he त्यागी *tyāgī* relinquisher इति *iti* thus अभिधीयते *abhidhīyate* is called

**It is indeed impossible for an embodied being to renounce action entirely. But he who renounces the fruit of action is regarded as one who has renounced.**

There are several points of similarity between the bodily existence and a flight in an aeroplane. One is called a *Jivatman* as long as one is embodied; this one is a Godward pilgrim. Another is called a passenger as long as he is flying. Bodily existence is renounced permanently by the *Jivatman* on the attainment of Godhood. The plane is vacated only on reaching the destination. Conditions while in the body are all alike those while in the aeroplane, which flies over plains, hills, dales, mountains and boisterous seas. Bodily existence has its pleasant and unpleasant aspects and its ups and downs. The aeroplane does not stop its work while in flight lest it should crash. Bodily activities also cannot be suspended by the embodied.

Karma takes place as long as the body lasts. Breathing, eating, sleeping—all these are bodily activ-

are fruit-bearing in their nature But the *Sāttvika Tyāgi* is not concerned with the fruit, he does his duty to the best of his ability though he is unattached to it He does not renounce karma, he only renounces the agency Calmness and purity are born of this frame of mind.

The in-patient in the hospital has no intention to be there permanently, neither does he want to be treated all through his life. Still he willingly undergoes treatment with an attitude of detachment. Such a man as he is the one who truly renounces ailment The *Sāttvika Tyāgi* renounces the fruit of his action after the fashion of a sensible patient who seeks to get rid of his disease

The patient, however, abhors his disease The *Sāttvika Tyāgi* is devoted to his obligatory duty. Breathing is the obligatory duty of all living beings The yogi resorts to *prānāyāma* or the scientific way of breathing which yields great benefits Still, the yogi does not do this great act with any attachment, he does it as disinterestedly as the others do their normal breathing He is verily a healthy man who is free from body-consciousness while being in the body He is verily a yogi who is free from the sense of agency while engaging himself in work intensively Adoring the Lord, serving the society, meditating on the Supreme — all these spiritual activities go on vehemently But the *sadhaka* is not conscious that he is the doer of these benign duties He is steadily fixed in *atma bodha* His renunciation verily is *Sāttvika Tyāga*

And how about the man who is attached to life and karma ? The answer comes :—

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥ १२

अन्-इष्टम् इष्टम् मिश्रम् च त्रि-विधम् कर्मणः फलम् ।
भवति अत्यागिनाम् प्र-इ-त्-य न तु सम्-न्यासिनाम् क्व-चित् ॥

*anistam istaṁ miśraṁ ca trividhaṁ karmaṇaḥ phalam* ।
*bhavaty atyāgināṁ pretya na tu saṁnyāsināṁ kvacit* ॥

अनिष्टम् *anistam* disagreeable इष्टम् *istaṁ* agreeable मिश्रम् *miśraṁ* mixed च *ca* and त्रिविधम् *trividhaṁ* threefold कर्मणः *karmaṇaḥ* of action फलम् *phalaṁ* fruit भवति *bhavati* accrues अत्यागिनाम् *atyāgināṁ* to non-abandoners प्रेत्य *pretya* after death न *na* not तु *tu* but संन्यासिनाम् *saṁnyāsināṁ* to abandoners क्वचित् *kvacit* ever

**The threefold fruit of action — evil, good and mixed — accrues after death to one who does not relinquish but there is none ever for the one who renounces. 12**

Being hurled into hell and being born as a beast is the fruit of evil action. Gaining heaven and being born as a celestial is the fruit of good action. Obtaining the earthly existence and being born as man is the fruit of mixed action. In the mixed action there are the elements of both good and evil actions. Transmigration is inevitable to those who are attached to karma. They are also subjected to happiness and misery. But the worldly weal and woe are not to those who are not attached to karma. They are also not entangled in the wheel of birth and death. They are blessed with *Mukti*.

it is in suspense. The mirror acquires no merit by reflecting beautiful objects, nor demerit by reflecting ugly and dirty objects. The position of *ātmachaitanya* is the same. The activities of the Prakriti are reflected in the Purusha. On that ground the Purusha is not affected in any way. *Sthitaprajna* or the man of steady understanding knows this truth. So he remains his doubts dispelled.

The duty of every one is to work hard and to contribute to the cause of prosperous living. Man's growth and expansion of life consist in the endeavours that he makes. Those who understand this fundamental have no problems and doubts pertaining to life on the earth. They apply themselves deliberately to whatever work they have undertaken. But there are those who view all work as painful. Their aim is to drift on to an easy-going life and get out of it as much pleasure and happiness as possible. They have no compunction to live like drones at the cost of others. They shrink from troublesome toil and seek quietism. The cloak of religiosity proves very handy to hide their hypocrisy. But the gems of society are they who are heroic in their endeavours, in their contribution to the common weal and in their bearing with equanimity the odds of life. And that is their conformity to renunciation.

Why should not one simplify things by renouncing all work instead of doing it in a detached way? The analysis comes :—

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥ ११

पञ्च एतानि (महद्) महा-बाहो कारणानि नि-बोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्र-उक्तानि सिद्धये सर्व-कर्मणाम् ॥

*pañcai 'tāni mahābāho kāraṇāni nibodha me* ।
*sāṁkhye kṛtānte proktāni siddhaye sarvakarmaṇām*

पञ्च *pañca* five एतानि *etāni* these महाबाहो *mahābāho* O mighty-armed कारणानि *kāraṇāni* causes निबोध *nibodha* learn मे *me* from me सांख्ये *sāṁkhye* in the Sankhya कृतान्ते *kṛtānte* which is the end of all action प्रोक्तानि *proktāni* as declared सिद्धये *siddhaye* for the accomplishment सर्वकर्मणाम् *sarva karmaṇāṁ* of all actions

**Learn from Me, O mighty-armed, these five factors in the accomplishment of all action, as taught in the Samkhya which is the end of action. 13**

As in chapter two, here also the *Sāṁkhya* refers to the philosophy of Vedanta and not to that of the sage Kapila, which deals with the cosmology. According to Vedanta, the undertaking of all karma is to transcend it ultimately. He who does karma imperfectly and he who shuns karma for any reason whatsoever cannot get to that state which is beyond karma. Prakriti which is characterized as composed of karma is the training ground of the *Jivatman.* As children go to school to learn, the *Jivatman* comes into the world to learn his lesson. The children apply themselves diligently to their studies. They are not to waste time. The required attainments have to be reached within the prescribed time. Then they have to pass out successfully. They are not to get stuck to the school permanently. These points are clearly borne in mind by the pupils. All these points apply to the *Jivatman* as well. He is to learn

ities going on ceaselessly. Obligatory duties also have to be executed relentlessly. The prudent man has his profitable way of getting his work done. While in the plane if the passenger gets worried over the possible dangers and risks of the flight, he defeats himself and his purpose. He does in no way improve matters by worrying himself; rather he loses his stamina thereby. Instead, if he resigns those eventualities to the crew and to Providence and if he engages himself in his higher pursuits, he stands to gain. His conducting himself in this wise amounts to renouncing the fruit of the flight, but not the flight itself. Man should engage himself in the earthly duties that fall to his lot. He ought not to be concerned with the consequences of his duties. While doing his duties, if he keeps his mind fixed on the Maker, his gain is immense and he is one who has truly renounced.

A man's body gets hurt accidentally. He neither weeps over it nor neglects it. He bandages the wound and gives all attention to it. If need be, money is spent for the cure. But in the midst of all of these activities, there is no attachment whatsoever to the wound that has come about. It is attended to so that it may be healed. That man who gets the wound treated is the one who has renounced it but not he who neglects it to the point of its becoming septic. Bodily activities are like the wound. They cannot be neglected. They ought to be carried on with complete detachment. He who does so has really renounced karma and everything worldly

where it exists. The proprietor is the agent. The wheels, the steering wheel, the brake, the clutch and the gear box are its various senses. Petrol is its *prāṇa* or life energy. The driver is the manipulating deity.

The human being has parts parallel to all these. The body is the centre from where attachment and aversion, joy and misery, the faculty of understanding — all these experiences express themselves. Ego is the agent that records these experiences. The senses of knowledge and the senses of action are his various senses. *Prāṇa* or the life energy functions in various ways. The *Jivatman* is the presiding deity manipulating all these instruments.

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।
न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥ १५

शरीर-वाक्-मनोभिः यत् कर्म प्र-आ-रभते नरः ।
न्याय्यम् वा वि-परि-इतम् वा पञ्च एते तस्य हेतवः ॥

*śarīravāṅmanobhir yat karma prārabhate naraḥ* ।
*nyāyyaṁ vā viparītaṁ vā pañcai 'te tasya hetavaḥ* ॥

शरीर वाक् मनोभिः *śarīra vāk manobhiḥ* by body, speech and mind यत् *yat* whatever कर्म *karma* action प्रारभते *prārabhate* performs नरः *naraḥ* man न्याय्यम् *nyāyyaṁ* right वा *vā* or विपरीतम् *viparītaṁ* the reverse वा *vā* or पञ्च *pañca* five एते *ete* these तस्य *tasya* its हेतवः *hetavaḥ* causes

**Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech or mind, whether right or wrong — these five are its causes.** **15**

There are marks to indicate that a man has reached perfection and that he no more needs to be born again. Such a man is ever contented in the Self. The body is hanging on him like a shadow. The activities of that body take place meticulously in spite of his having withdrawn the mind from it. While actively in the world, he is not of the world.

The immediate future birth of a man attached to karma may also be inferred now and here. Death and rebirth are like sleep and reawakening. The man who goes to sleep gets up in the same body and the man who dies wakes up in another body. A bad man going to sleep wakes up a bad man and so is the case with a good man too. There are people who wallow in hell even here on earth. There are the others who behave like brutes. Yet others walk the earth as celestials and they make a heaven of this world. Still others exhibit all human traits only. All these varying characteristics go along with them when they relinquish the existing bodies and choose to build new bodies. Their rebirths are according to their traits. The sequence is maintained.

The fruit of action is his who thinks of himself as the author of karma. *Happiness and misery come* to him as a result of this thought. But is man in reality the originator of karma? The exposition comes:—

**The Components of Karma — 13-16**

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ १३

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥ १६

तत्र एवम् सति कर्तारम् आत्मानम् केवलम् तु यः ।
पश्यति अ-कृत-बुद्धि-त्वात् न सः (एव) पश्य्-अति दुर्-मतिः ॥

*tatrai 'vaṁ sati kartāram ātmānaṁ kevalaṁ tu yaḥ* ।
*paśyaty akṛta buddhitvān na sa paśyati durmatiḥ* ॥

तत्र *tatra* there एवम् *evaṁ* thus सति *sati* being कर्तारम् *kartāraṁ* as the agent आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the Self केवलम् *kevalaṁ* alone तु *tu* verily यः *yaḥ* who पश्यति *paśyati* sees अकृतबुद्धित्वात् *akṛta buddhitvāt* owing to untrained understanding न *na* not सः *saḥ* he पश्यति *paśyati* sees दुर्मतिः *durmatiḥ* of perverted intelligence

**That being so, the man of perverse mind, who, on account of his imperfect understanding looks upon the Self, the Absolute, as the agent — he does not see at all. 16**

The example of the motor car may again be taken to clarify the great teaching contained in this stanza. Earth, water, fire and air are the four elements out of five, that are utilized for the manufacture and functioning of this vehicle. Its components have all been mainly procured from the earth which further serves as the support on which the car runs. The supply of the parts comes from the earth and the activity of the car called movement takes place on the earth. Though supplying the resources and facilities for the activities of the car, the earth remains actionless in its relationship with the vehicle. It plays no part in the fivefold actiyity of the car.

his lessons from Prakriti He has to know of the nature of karma even when he is involved in it, and to get himself beyond it, is the goal set for him

The five factors are expounded as follows —

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ १४

अधि स्थानम् तथा कर्ता करणम् च पृथक्-विधम् ।
वि विधाः च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवम् च एव अत्र पञ्चमम् ॥

*adhisthānam tathā kartā karanam ca pṛthagvidham* ।
*vividhāś ca pṛthakceṣṭā daivam cai 'vā 'tra pañcamam*

अधिष्ठानम् *adhisthānam* the seat or body तथा *tathā* also कर्ता *kartā* the doer करणम् *karanam* the senses च *ca* and पृथग्विधम् *pṛthagvidham* various विविधा *vividhāḥ* various च *ca* and पृथक् *prthak* different चेष्टा *cestāḥ* functions दैवम् *daivam* the presiding deity च *ca* and एव *eva* even अत्र *atra* here पञ्चमम् *pañcamam* the fifth

**The body, the agent, the various senses, the different functions of various sorts, and the presiding deity also, the fifth. 14**

A parallel requires to be drawn here between a motor car and the human being An automobile moves The various things that contribute to its motion have to be taken into consideration Heaps of bolts, nuts, bars, plates and other parts are found in the factory before a car is assembled The raw rubber juice is in the tree, the petrol is in the womb of earth and water on its surface, air is in the space above earth All these elements are made use of to fabricate a car The factory is the body or the place

*karaṇa* or mental faculty gets clarified. But the dullard takes the Atman as the agent.

Atman is Inaction — 17

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ १७

यस्य न अहम्-कृतः भावः बुद्धिः यस्य न लिप्-यते ।
हन्-त्वा अपि सः इमान् लोकान् न हन्-ति न निबध्यते ॥

*yasya nā 'haṁkṛto bhāvo buddhir yasya na lipyate ।*
*hatvā 'pi sa imāṁl lokān na hanti na nibadhyate* ॥

यस्य *yasya* whose न *na* not अहंकृतः *ahaṁ kṛtaḥ* egoistic भावः *bhāvaḥ* the notion बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intelligence यस्य *yasya* of whom न *na* not लिप्यते *lipyate* is tainted हत्वा *hatvā* having slain अपि *api* even सः *saḥ* he इमान् *imān* these लोकान् *lokān* people न *na* not हन्ति *hanti* slays न *na* not निबध्यते *nibadhyate* is bound

**He who is free from the notion of egoism and whose understanding is not tainted — though he kills these people, he kills not, nor is he bound.** 17

Modifications such as agency and egoism create difference between man and man. But as man evolves high, he is able to outgrow all modifications and be established in Pure Consciousness. Let us take cases of men being affected by modifications and those not being affected by them. Men act on the stage as murdering and as being murdered. These acts being mere pretence, agency and egoism are absent in them. The actors are not affected by the staged modifications. But where an actual murder takes place, the concerned men are affected by the modifications of agency and egoism. Whereas

The motor car assembled of innumerable parts may be made use of for various purposes Some may make use of it for murder and theft Some others may avail themselves of it to rescue people involved in dangers and accidents Yet others may utilize it for quick medical aid Pleasure hunters put it to use in their own way. Educational tourists commission it for their purpose.

The human body may be used in all the ways mentioned herein It is aptly called the *dharma kshetra* The human tabernacle made of the five components, can be utilized for noble purposes It may be sublimated into a temple and Divinity invoked into it And these are verily acts of dharma They are therefore right doings This body which comes into being from the five causes enumerated above also allows itself to be converted into a den of demoniacal doings. All possible wrong may be perpetrated with it It is as much useful for bad acts as for good ones.

All the activities carried on by man are brought under the triple heading — thought, word and deed. The subtlest of the karma takes place in the mind in the forms of thoughts and feelings Not a moment passes without mind doing karma of one kind or another The gross manifestations of it are words and deeds

How is Atman connected with these activities going on in body, speech and mind? The answer comes —

Purusha is free from karma. No vibration of any kind takes place in him. Prakriti is the doer of all karma, while Purusha is merely the witness to it. But for the presence of the Purusha, no action is possible for the Prakriti. So say the scriptures.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Three Gunas give Impetus to Karma — 18-40

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥ १८

ज्ञानम् (ज्ञा-यम्) ज्ञेयम् परि-ज्ञाता त्रि-विधा कर्म-चोदना ।
करणम् कर्म कर्ता इति त्रिविधः कर्म-सम्-ग्रहः ॥

*jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ parijñātā trividhā karmacodanā* ।
*karaṇaṁ karma karte 'ti trividhaḥ karmasaṁgrahaḥ*॥

ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge ज्ञेयम् *jñeyaṁ* the knowable परिज्ञाता *parijñātā* the knower त्रिविधा *trividhā* threefold कर्मचोदना *karmacodanā* impulse to action करणम् *karaṇaṁ* the organ कर्म *karma* the action कर्ता *kartā* the agent इति *iti* thus त्रिविधः *trividhaḥ* threefold कर्मसंग्रहः *karma saṁgrahaḥ* the basis of action

**Knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower form the threefold incitement to action; and the instrument, the object and the agent are the threefold constituents of action. 18**

Knowledge mentioned herein refers to the knowledge obtained through the senses. The object of knowledge is that which is perceived by the senses and interpreted by the intellect. The knower is the *Jivatman* burdened with and impeded by all of his inclinations and dispositions. These three put together form the *triputi* or the triad of knowledge.

It shall not be called either the agent or the presiding deity of the automobile

The author of a karma is that which actually performs it The categories of Prakriti are given to the ceaseless execution of it. All the five causes of action mentioned in stanza fourteen belong to Prakriti A doubt may arise whether the fifth cause designated as *daiva* or the presiding deity, is a category of Prakriti or a facet of Brahman The truth of it is to be arrived at through an analogy *ākāsa* and *vāyu* (ether and air) are almost alike. Subtlety is common to both of them. But while *ākāsa* is all-pervading and immovable *vāyu* is limited in space and movable Similarly the *daiva* referred to here is like Atman but not actually Atman He is *chidābhāsa* or reflected Atman This *daiva* is the *Jivatman* and not the Paramatman A reflected consciousness is not the original Consciousness any more than a reflected sun on a wave can ever be the original sun *Jivatman* works while the Paramatman does no work There is modification in the former while the latter is free from it *ātma chaitanya* reflected in Prakriti is the *Jivatman,* so he works as a category of the Prakriti. The *Jiva* and the *Jagat* make their appearance on Paramatman or the *Chidākāsa*, sport on It and merge back into It All these activities are karma belonging to Prakriti The *Chidākāsa* or the Paramatman is ever constant, immovable, full and perfect in Itself. The play of the Prakriti does not affect It in any manner The *Jivatman* understands this truth when his *antaḥ-*

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥ १९

ज्ञानम् कर्म च कर्ता च त्रि-धा एव गुण-भेद-तः ।
प्र-उच्-यते गुण-संख्याने यथावत् शृणु तानि अपि ॥

*jñānaṁ karma ca kartā ca tridhai 'va guṇabhedataḥ* ।
*procyate guṇasaṁkhyāne yathāvac chṛṇu tāny api* ॥

ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge कर्म *karma* action च *ca* and कर्ता *kartā* actor च *ca* and त्रिधा *tridhā* of three kinds एव *eva* only गुणभेदतः *guṇa bhedataḥ* according to the distinction of Gunas प्रोच्यते *procyate* are declared गुणसंख्याने *guṇasaṁkhyāne* in the science of Gunas Sankhya philosophy) यथावत् *yathāvat* duly शृणु *śṛṇu* hear तानि *tāni* them अपि *api* also

**Knowledge, action and actor are declared in the science of Gunas to be of three kinds only, according to the distinction of Gunas; hear of them also as they are.** **19**

Among the six systems of philosophy Samkhya is the fourth, and the sage Kapila is the author of it. This system is the authority in regard to Cosmology. So, the functionings of the three Gunas have to be learnt from it. The Purushas are many in number according to this school of thought. The existence of the Paramatman supremely above them all, is not accepted by the Samkhya. It is not therefore an authority in regard to the Supreme Reality. The Vedanta philosophy is the authority in this respect. But the Samkhya alone has to be relied on, to know all about the Prakriti; and the Lord attests to this fact. In the statement, "Hear of them also as they

to a spiritually evolved man stage act and life act are one and the same. Because of the absence of egoism, no modification of any kind takes place in his mind. There are instances of this in the Mahabharata war itself. Arjuna vanquished his grandfather Bhishma in the encounter. But he did not harbour the egoistic feeling that he caused the death of the grandsire. His mind was free from that modification. While waiting to give up the body in the auspicious northern passage of the sun, Bhishma did not feel that he was vanquished. Non-ego was the cause of it. As a man casts off a worn out clothing, Bhishma cast off his old body, unattached as he was to it.

The reflection of a moving body is seen in a mirror. That mirror is not the creator of the reflection and its movement. The reflection leaves no impression either in the mirror. While reflecting the things as they are, the mirror is ever itself, unattached, unaffected and unmodified. Like the mirror is Atman, the Pure Consciousness. It reveals the activities of the Prakriti. But Atman is no doer of karma. It is not bound in spite of Its being the lord, ruler and regulator of the Prakriti. That *Jivatman* who traces his original state to this Pure Consciousness regains his taintless understanding. Freed that he is from egoism he is not affected by the actions of the body and the senses. Happenings such as killing and being killed are all modifications of the Prakriti. As Atman is supremely above karma, the knower of Atman also rises above the turmoils of karma.

The Imperishable Being is the Substratum behind the many. It is the One without a second. It is undivided like the *ākāsa*. It undergoes no modification even though Prakriti emanates from It. Infinite as It is, no change is possible in It. Nothing can be added to It and nothing can be subtracted from It; for, It is Imperishable. It does not divide Itself into different Atmas in different beings. To know this Great Being as It is, is *Sāttvika* knowledge.

Though the air carries fragrance and foul smell alike, it is not affected by them. Such is even the case with the Paramatman, the Basis of the varying universe.

— Sri Ramakrishna

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ २१

पृथक्-त्वेन तु यत् ज्ञानम् नाना-भावान् पृथक्-विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तत् ज्ञानम् विद्-(द्धि)धि राजसम् ॥

*pṛthaktvena tu yaj jñānaṁ nānābhāvān pṛthagvidhān* ।
*vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu taj jñānaṁ viddhi rājasam* ॥

पृथक्त्वेन *pṛthaktvena* as different from one another तु *tu* but यत् *yat* which ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge नाना भावान् *nānā bhāvān* various entities पृथग्विधान् *pṛthag vidhān* of distinct kinds वेत्ति *vetti* knows सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* in all भूतेषु *bhūteṣu* in beings तत् *tat* that ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge विद्धि *viddhi* know राजसम् *rājasaṁ* Rajasika

**But that knowledge by which one sees in all beings manifold entities of different kinds as varying from one another — know that that knowledge is Rajasika.** 21

Of these three, where the one is, the other two are bound to be, like the three sides of a triangle. The action, the instrument and the object or agent contribute to make the triad of karma. Induced by this triad, the mind, the speech and the body discharge their respective functions. The desirable and the undesirable aspects of karma are made evident by this triad.

The *instruments* are *twofold, internal and external*. The *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta* and *ahamkāra* are the internal instruments. The body, the tongue, the eye, the nose and the ear are the external instruments. They divide themselves again as the instruments of knowledge and the instruments of action. The *Jivatman* himself functions as the agent to all these activities. He is the knower as well as the doer. Both *jnāna* and karma are indispensable to the self-culture that he is undergoing. A schoolboy requires both play and study for his progress. He is to build the body and enrich the mind. This two-sided growth becomes more pronounced in the *Jivatman*. As he adds to his knowledge he grows in the efficiency of work. As he applies himself to a variety of endeavours, his experience and knowledge are on the increase. Therefore, he stands in need of the triad of *jnāna* and the triad of karma mentioned in the above stanza.

We see in the *Jivatman* gradation both in the knowledge and the capacity to work. What is it that brings about this differentiation? The explanation follows :—

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २२

यत् तु कृत्स्नवत् एकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तम् (सञ्ज्-तम्) अ-हैतुकम् ।
अ-तद्-त्व-अर्थ-वत् अल्पम् च तत् तामसम् उद्-आ-हृतम् ॥

*yat tu kṛtsnavad ekasmin kārye saktam ahaitukam |*
*atattvārthavad alpaṁ ca tat tāmasam udāhṛtam ||*

यत् *yat* which तु *tu* but कृत्स्नवत् *kṛtsnavat* as if it were the whole एकस्मिन् *ekasmin* one single कार्ये *kārye* to effect सक्तम् *saktaṁ* attached अहैतुकम् *ahaitukaṁ* without reason अतत्त्वार्थवत् *atattvārthavat* without foundation in truth अल्पम् *alpaṁ* trivial च *ca* and तत् *tat* that तामसम् *tāmasaṁ* Tamasika उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtaṁ* is declared

**And the knowledge that clings to one single effect as if it were the whole, and is without reason, without foundation in truth, and trivial — that knowledge is declared to be Tamasika.** 22

There are people who believe that their individuality is confined to the physical frame made of the five elements. The perishing matter is mistaken for the persisting principle. An image is merely an aid for the worship of God, just as a map is an aid for the study of a country. But the ignorant man thinks that the image itself made of a metal or of wood or of clay to be God. If the image be mutilated he feels God has been despoiled. This attitude is an evidence to the fact that he clings to one single effect as if it were the whole. That he is an entity more than the body and that God is above form are truths incomprehensible to him. God as Truth is

are," the Lord further makes it clear that the teachings of the Samkhya about Nature and its working are in tune with reason and experience

The competence of the taught is a factor that demands deep scrutiny The disciples are graded as the intelligent, the mediocre and the dull The first rate aspirant grasps the means and the end at the very first teaching, the mediocre one requires to be a little more painstaking, and the backward student requires long drilling and preparation Even he can be pulled up appreciably with constant application.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २०

सर्व भूतेषु येन एकम् भावम् अ-वि-अयम् इक्ष्-अते ।
अ-वि भज्-तम् वि-भज्-तेषु तद् ज्ञानम् विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥

*sarvabhūtesu yenai 'kam bhāvam avyayam ikṣate* ।
*avibhaktam vibhaktesu taj jñānam viddhi sāttvikam* ॥

सर्वभूतेषु *sarva bhūtesu* in all beings येन *yena* by which एकम् *ekam* one भावम् *bhāvam* reality अव्ययम् *avyayam* indestructible ईक्षते *ikṣate* (one) sees अविभक्तम् *avibhaktam* inseparate विभक्तेषु *vibhakteṣu* in the separated तत् *tat* that ज्ञानम् *jñānam* knowledge विद्धि *viddhi* know सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikam* Sattvika

**The knowledge by which the one Imperishable Being is seen in all existences, undivided in the divided, know that that knowledge is Sattvika. 20**

The categories of the Prakriti have divided themselves into the multitudinous The movable and the immovable, the sentient and the insentient—all these are the modifications of Nature or *Māyā*

**one not desirous of the fruit, that action is declared to be Sattvika.** 23

Breathing is indispensable to life; and it is done without love or hatred. An ordained duty also ought to be executed in that manner. The obligatory duty of a man varies with his attainments. The working out of a sum in arithmetic by a pupil differs according to the standard in which he is placed. Similarly the duties of men vary according to their station in life. The duties of Arjuna's station were to wage a righteous war, to protect the weak and to punish the wicked. Every individual in society has his duty to discharge. It has to be executed faithfully and as incessantly as breathing. No selfish consideration should dominate that work. Duty for duty's sake is the motto of the yogi. When the duty is discharged with a sterling attitude, the man grows both in knowledge and efficiency. Action of this calibre is upheld as *Sāttvika.*

A man of *Sattvika* nature makes no show of his spiritual practices. As far as possible he keeps his holy doings concealed from public gaze. While the others are asleep at midnight, he sits up within the mosquito-curtain and meditates.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २४

यत् तु काम-ईप्सुना कर्म स-अहम्-कारेण वा पुनः ।
क्रि-यते बहुल-आयासम् तत् राजसम् उद्-आ-हृतम् ॥

*yat tu kāmepsunā karma sāhaṁkāreṇa vā punaḥ* ।
*kriyate bahulāyāsaṁ tad rājasam udāhṛtam* ॥

The *Rajasika* knowledge holds that there are Atmas of varying traits residing in the bodies of various types and grades of evolution. The Atman itself has to undergo evolution as the body does, is the view entertained by this school of thought. Gold ore may be procured from different continents and they may all have different kinds of dross pertaining to the nature of the earth. While there is difference in the dross, pure gold is the same independent of the sediment and the soil. Similarly the Atmas seem one different from another because of the limiting adjuncts — *Upādhis*. It is even believed that Atmas belong to different species, castes, colours and nationalities Attaching importance to these *upādhis* is the way of the *Rajasika* knowledge. But these limiting adjuncts are born of ignorance. When they are all eliminated Pure Consciousness alone remains. In unselfish love, there is no such thing as the oriental love and the occidental love. In its pure form love is a universal factor governing and guiding life. But for it, existence is not worth having. There is another category in life, which is worth studying. In dreamless sound sleep all differentiations get dissolved. The high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, the virtuous and the sinful, the happy and the miserable—all these inequalities vanish in that state. An indeterminate universal existence alone remains then as vague consciousness. All these phases of the underlying unity are not cognized by the *Rajasika* knowledge. It sees nothing but diversity.

Seeing unity is knowledge, seeing diversity is ignorance.

— Sri Ramakrishna

But that for which man has not yet made himself worthy, does not come to him, try however much he may. Making meaningless efforts in such cases is verily a *Rajasika* action.

How does a wicked egoism assert itself? "Don't you know who I am? I am so much moneyed. Is there anybody superior to me?" In this fashion it makes itself felt.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥ २५

अनु-बन्धम् क्षयम् हिंसाम् अन्-अव-ईक्ष्-य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहात् आ-रभ्-य-ते कर्म यत् तत् तामसम् उच्यते ॥

*anubandhaṁ kṣayaṁ hiṁsām anapekṣya ca pauruṣam* ।
*mohād ārabhyate karma yat tat tāmasam ucyate* ॥

अनुबन्धम् *anubandhaṁ* consequence क्षयम् *kṣayaṁ* loss हिंसाम् *hiṁsāṁ* injury अनपेक्ष्य *anapekṣya* without regard च *ca* and पौरुषम् *pauruṣaṁ* one's own ability मोहात् *mohāt* from delusion आरभ्यते *ārabhyate* is undertaken कर्म *karma* action यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that तामसम् *tāmasaṁ* Tamasika उच्यते *ucyate* is declared

**That action which is undertaken from delusion, without heed to the consequence, loss, injury and ability, that is declared to be Tamasika.** 25

The man immersed in *Tamas* is not able to discern whether his undertaking is good or bad, much less the consequence of it. Loss of energy, loss of property and money, loss of time — these reverses do not occur to him as bad. His endeavours are harmful both to him and to the others. It is not within his ken that his resources fall too short of the

Indestructible. God as an All-powerful and All-merciful Reality has provided various paths and beliefs to suit the different types of men. The ignorant man does not take note of these facts and he refuses to do so. He imagines himself a self-appointed champion of God and a defender of faith. In the name of serving God and religion he does havoc to society and prevents its harmonious growth. The so-called proselytizer plays the part of the blind leading the blind. These are all specimens of the *Tamasika* knowledge. On scrutiny they are found to be not in tune with reason. Rather, they come into conflict with reason. They are so, because they are not founded in truth. Whims and fancies as they are, they have to be treated as trivial. Nothing good comes out of such baseless understanding.

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥ २३

नि-य(म्)-तम् सङ्ग-रहितम् अ-राग-द्वेषतः कृ-तम् ।
अ-फल-प्र-ईप्सुना कर्म यत् तद् सात्त्विकम् उच्यते ॥

*niyatam sangarahitam arāgadveṣataḥ kṛtam* ।
*aphalaprepsunā karma yat tat sāttvikaṁ ucyate* ॥

नियतम् *niyataṁ* ordained सङ्गरहितम् *sanga rahitaṁ* free from attachment अरागद्वेषत: *arāga dvesataḥ* without love or hatred कृतम् *kṛtaṁ* done अफलप्रेप्सुना *aphala prepsunā* by one not desirous of the fruit कर्म *karma* action यत *yat* which तन् *tat* that सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikaṁ* Sattvika उच्यते *ucyate* is declared

**An action which is ordained, which is free from attachment, which is done without love or hatred by**

as his, he views it as the temple of the Lord. Whatever karma takes place with that body as the instrument is the doing of Iswara and none else. This frame of mind helps him erase egoism. The belief that he is a faithful servant of the Lord induces him to do his duty with zeal and firmness. Nobody in the world has turned out so much beneficial work as the devotees of the Lord.

He who is attached to the fruit of his work gets elated in success and dejected in failure. But that other man who does his duty as the command from the High, appears as the agent while he is actually the instrument. When the archer misses the target, it is no fault of the arrow; when he shoots it successfully on the target, the credit does not go to the arrow. He who is a genuine instrument in the hands of the Lord behaves as if he were an arrow. Success and failure are not his. An unaffected and unperturbed mind is his. Such an agent is endued with *Sāttvika*.

That soft soil alone which is free from pebbles and stones is favourable for the seeds to sprout. Similarly, the mind of that devotee alone untainted by perversion and conceit, is best suited for the Lord to reveal Himself in.

—Sri Ramakrishna

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ २७

रागी कर्म(न्)-फल-प्र-ईप्सु, लुभ्-तः हिंसा-आत्मकः अ-शुचिः ।
हर्ष-शोक-अनु-इ-तः कर्ता राजसः परि-कीर्तितः ॥

*rāgī karmaphalaprepsur lubdho himsātmako 'śuciḥ ।*
*harṣaśokānvitaḥ kartā rājasaḥ parikīrtitaḥ ॥*

यत् *yat* which तु *tu* but कामेप्सुना *kāmepsunā* by one longing for desires कर्म *karma* action साहंकारेण *sāhamkāreṇa* with egoism वा *vā* or पुनः *punaḥ* again क्रियते *kriyate* is performed बहुलायासम् *bahulāyāsam* with much effort तत् *tat* that राजसम् *rājasam* Rajasika उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtaṁ* is declared

**But that action which is done by one craving for desires, or again with egoism, or with much effort, that is declared to be Rajasika. 24**

Desire is of two kinds. What promotes man's ethical progress, what induces spiritual anguish, what aids service to beings—a desire of this kind is wholesome and fit to be fostered. But that desire which entangles man more in worldliness ought to be scrupulously eschewed. Earning money by honest means and expending it on good causes is *dravya yajna*, which ought to be performed. Money should not be earned by unfair means, even though it may be for a good cause. Foul habits deprive man of manliness.

The very fact that man owns a body is a mark of egoism. In addition to it, if the body be used for indulgence, if it be decorated and if it be unduly fattened—these undesirable acts lead to worse forms of egoism. The boon of the human body ought not to be used for base purposes. A pompous body-centred life is the sign of egoism born of *Rajas*. This base nature may be overcome by holding the body as the temple of God.

Nothing can be achieved without effort. And a reasonable effort is sanctioned for all undertakings.

अयुक्तः *ayuktaḥ* unsteady प्राकृतः *prākṛtaḥ* vulgar स्तब्धः *stabdhaḥ* unbending शठः *śaṭhaḥ* cheating नैष्कृतिकः *naiṣkṛtikaḥ* malicious अलसः *alasaḥ* lazy विषादी *viṣādī* desponding दीर्घसूत्री *dīrgha sūtrī* procrastinating च *ca* and कर्ता *kartā* agent तामसः *tāmasaḥ* Tamasika उच्यते *ucyate* is said

**Unsteady, vulgar, stubborn, deceitful, malicious, indolent, despondent, procrastinating — such an agent is called Tamasika. 28**

That man who practises self-control, self-discipline and self-dedication grows in steadfastness. That other man who is alien to these benign habits would be unsteady in all of his undertakings. Wallowing in low physical life, lacking in intellectual development, evincing childishness in all dealings—these are the signs of vulgarity. Stubborn is that man who refuses to pay homage to great ones worthy of reverence. The shirker who does not harness his talents for any good cause, but allows them all to rust away is deceitful. That man who wilfully creates hatred and enmity among people is said to be malicious. An indolent man is he who does not engage himself in the work in which he is expected to take part. Despondency is a disease of the mind warranting a radical cure. For, he who is a victim of depression and dejection is good for nothing. All manliness dwindles away from him. The passing despondency that came by Arjuna was vehemently reprimanded by the Lord. The teachings known as the Bhagavad Gita came about to cure Arjuna of that disease. When an undertaking that is to be completed in a day is dragged on for days together,

project into which he launches The doings of such a man are born of *Tamas*.

It is only after the practice of intense *tapas* that men are freed of guile and stinginess God vision comes to them who are free from crookedness and cunning But in the name of simplicity man should not become a simpleton It is good to be a devotee, but bad to be a dullard Know what is right and do what is good

— Sri Ramakrishna

After dilating on knowledge and action, the Lord now dilates on the agent —

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ २६

मुच्-त-सग अन् अहम् वादी धृति उद्-साह सम् अनु-इत ।
सिद्धि अ-सिद्ध्यो निर्-विकार॰ कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥

*muktasango 'nahamvādi dhṛtyutsāhasamanvitah* ।
*siddhyasiddhyor nirvikārah kartā sāttvika ucyate* ॥

मुक्तसङ्ग *muktasangah* who is free from attachment अनहंवादी *anahamvādi* non-egoistic धृति उत्साहसमन्वित *dhṛti utsāha samanvitah* endued with firmness and enthusiasm सिद्धि असिद्ध्यो *siddhi asiddhyoh* in success or failure निर्विकार *nirvikārah* unaffected कर्ता *kartā* an agent सात्त्विक *sāttvikah* Sattvika उच्यते *ucyate* is called

**An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endued with firmness and zeal and unaffected by success or failure, is called Sattvika. 26**

The *sadhaka* gets fixed in the conviction that it is Iswara who sports assuming the forms of beings and it is His work that is being done by all the beings And it is this attitude of his that relieves him of all attachment Instead of claiming the body

called *Dhananjaya* or the conqueror of wealth. Money is not intended to be hoarded and kept idle. It has to circulate and be useful to a large section of people. When that public purpose is not served, the ruling king has got the right to take possession of the property and utilize it properly. And Arjuna discharged that kingly duty very effectively.

*Buddhi* or understanding is the faculty of distinguishing between the good and the bad, between the right action and the wrong. There are three grades of the grasping power. *Dhrti* denotes firmness of mind that does not slacken or waver in the execution of a work. In this fixity of purpose also there are three forms.

Dolls may be made of sugar, cloth and stone. The sugar-doll soaked in water dissolves away. The cloth-doll absorbs plenty of water, but does not lose its individuality. The stone-doll does not allow water to percolate. Men who are prepared to merge their individuality in Paramatman are like the sugar-doll. Devotees that imbibe bliss and wisdom from the Lord are like the cloth-doll. The hardbaked worldly man who is proof against godliness is like the stone-doll.

— Sri Ramakrishna

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३०

प्र-वृत्-तिम् च नि-वृत्-तिम् च कार्य-अ-कार्ये भय-अ-भये ।
बन्धम् मोक्षम् च या वेद्-ति बुध्-तिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥

*pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca kāryākārye bhayābhaye |*
*bandhaṁ mokṣaṁ ca yā vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī*

प्रवृत्तिम् *pravṛttiṁ* the path of work च *ca* and निवृत्तिम् *nivṛttiṁ* the path of renunciation च *ca* and कार्य अकार्ये *kārya akārye* what ought to be done and

रागी *rāgı* passıonate कर्मफलप्रेप्सु *karma phala prepsuh* desırous of the fruıts of actıon लुब्ध *lubdhaḥ* greedy हिंसात्मक *hımsātmakaḥ* cruel अशुचि *aśucıḥ* impure हर्षशोक अन्वित *harṣa śoka anvıtaḥ* moved by joy and sorrow कर्ता *kartā* agent राजस *rājasaḥ* Rajasıka परिकीर्तित *parıkırtıtaḥ* is called

**Passionate, desıring to obtain the fruit of action, greedy, cruel, ımpure, moved by joy and sorrow — such an agent ıs saıd to be Rajasıka.** **27**

A greedy person ıs he who trıes by faır or foul means to appropriate the propertıes of others to hımself He does not hesıtate to cause ınjury to others while gıvıng effect to his base desıgn Because of his mean decısıon he ıs not pure ın thought, word and deed When his plot succeeds he ıs besıde hımself with joy, when ıt faıls sorrow overtakes hım These are the traıts of an agent who ıs *Rajasika* by nature

Cunnıng ıs no vırtue Nobody ıs more cunnıng than a crow It steals artfully It ıs ever alert lest ıt should be caught It exploıts the helplessness of little children All the same, ıt ıs ever out to eat filth There are people of the nature of the crow They are deceıtful calculatıve and cunnıng But their one concern day and nıght ıs to grab low and vulgar thıngs Such people are ıncapable of takıng to the path of spırıtualıty

— Srı Ramakrıshna

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥ २८

अ युक्त प्राकृत स्तब्ध शठ नैष्कृतिक अलस ।
वि षादी दीर्घ सूत्री च कर्ता तामस (ब्रू वच) उच् य त ॥

*ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhaḥ śatho naıskṛtıko 'lasaḥ* ।
*vısādı dırghasūtrī ca kartā tāmasa ucyate* ॥

discriminate between the good deeds and the bad ones.

Is this world unreal? It is unreal as long as you have not realized Iswara. For, you do not recognize His presence in the things worldly. The feeling of "I and mine" has gone deep into you. Therefore you have become bound to the world. You are drowning yourself increasingly in the ocean of *Samsara*. Though the path of liberation is easy and straight, delusion has covered your eyes and so you knock about here and there like a blind man. You know that *Samsara* is impermanent. Ponder over the house you live in. How many have been born and how many have died in it! Worldly things appear in a trice before you and they disappear too, in a trice. Those whom you hold as your kith and kin are not so after you die. Still, how deep is man's attachment to the world! Though nobody at home is dependent on an old man, he finds no time to go to Banaras. He gets no leisure for devotional practices. "What will become of my dear grandson, Harisa if I do not look after him?" says he and gets attached to the child. This is the deplorable way of the worldly man.

— Sri Ramakrishna

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३१

यया धर्मम् अ-धर्मम् च कार्यम् च अ-कार्यम् एव च ।
अ-यथा-वत् प्र-जा-नाति बुध्-धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥

*yayā dharmam adharmaṁ ca*
*kāryaṁ cā 'kāryam eva ca* ।
*ayathāvat prajānāti*
*buddhiḥ sā pārtha rājasī* ॥

यया *yayā* by which धर्मम् *dharmaṁ* dharma अधर्मम् *adharmaṁ* adharma च *ca* and कार्यम् *kāryaṁ* what ought to be done च *ca* and अकार्यम् *akāryaṁ* what ought not to be done एव *eva* even च *ca* and अयथावत् *ayathāvat* wrongly प्रजानाति *prajānāti* understands

it is procrastination Achievements of life get lost because of this evil The *Tamasika* agent suffers from all these evils

A fisherman cast his net and caught fish in a river Many among the catch lay quiet within the net, making no effort to escape Some of them made unsuccessful attempts But a few somehow managed to jump out of the net Likewise, men of the world are of three sorts (1) those who make no effort for emancipation (2) the aspirants who seek deliverance (3) the liberated souls

— Sri Ramakrishna

The gradations of understanding and of firmness are being explained now —

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥ २९

बुध्-ते भेदम् धृते च एव गुण-त त्रि-विधम् शृणु ।
प्र-(वच्)उच् य-मानम् अ-शेषेण पृथक्-त्वेन धन म्-जय ॥

*buddher bhedam dhṛteś cai 'va gunatas trividham śṛnu*
*procyamānam aśesena pṛthaktvena dhanamjaya* ||

बुद्धे *buddheḥ* of intellect भेदम् *bhedam* division धृते *dhṛteḥ* of firmness च *ca* and एव *eva* even गुणत *gunataḥ* according to qualities त्रिविधम् *trividham* threefold शृणु *śṛnu* hear प्रोच्यमानम् *procyamānam* as I declare अशेषेण *aśeṣena* fully पृथक्त्वेन *pṛthaktvena* distinctly धनजय *dhanamjaya* O Dhananjaya

**Hear the threefold distinction of understanding and firmness, according to the Gunas, as I explain them exhaustively and severally, O Dhananjaya. 29**

When Arjuna was itinerating in heaven and on earth, he demanded and took away fabulous wealth from the celestials and from earthly kings So he is

men are objects of ridicule to him. He scrupulously avoids associating with good people. Any talk on spiritual matters would be distasteful to him. He would hold spiritual men as unfit for life and mock at them. His wicked earnings would be all spent on evil projects. For no good cause would he part with a pie. This is how the *Rajasika* intellect works.

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२

अ-धर्मम् धर्मम् इति या मन्-य-ते तमसा आ-वृ-ता ।
सर्व-अर्थान् वि-परि-इतान् च बुध्-तिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥

*adharmaṁ dharmam iti yā manyate tamasā 'vṛtā* ।
*sarvārthān viparītāṁś ca buddhiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī* ॥

अधर्मम् *adharmaṁ* adharma धर्मम् *dharmaṁ* dharma इति *iti* thus या *yā* which मन्यते *manyate* thinks तमसा *tamasā* in darkness आवृता *āvṛtā* enveloped सर्वार्थान् *sarvārthān* all things विपरीतान् *viparītān* perverted च *ca* and बुद्धिः *buddhiḥ* intellect सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha तामसी *tāmasī* Tamasika

**That which, enveloped in darkness, regards adharma as dharma and views all things in a perverted way, that intellect, O Partha, is Tamasika.** 32

A perverted intelligence is that which regards the good as bad and the bad as good. A patient refuses to take a prescribed medicine stating that it is not to his taste and insists on helping himself to a dish palatable to him though it would aggravate his disease. Going to school appears troublesome and purposeless to the immature understanding of a boy of *Tamasika* nature. Playing truant and joining the

what ought not to be done भय अभये *bhaya abhaye* fear and fearlessness बन्धम् *bandham* bondage मोक्षम् *mokṣam* liberation च *ca* and या *yā* that वेत्ति *vetti* knows बुद्धि *buddhiḥ* intellect सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सात्त्विकी *sāttvikī* Sattvika

**The intellect which knows the paths of work and renunciation, right and wrong action, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation – that intellect, O Partha, is Sattvika. 30**

*Pravṛtti* is the path of interested work or the path of entanglement in earthly life. It involves the *Jivatman* in the wheel of birth and death *Nivṛtti* is the path of renunciation or the path of emancipation from earthly life. This term applies to *Akarma* and *Sanyāsa* too It aids transcendence into the Beyond The right action is that which is helpful to the spiritual progress of man This sanctioned action may be so modified as to suit the different times, places and circumstances But the wrong action is that which is detrimental to man's progress. Man must fear to do bad action The word fear here is used in the sense that man should refrain from doing bad action To the man of right understanding there is nothing to fear here or in the hereafter Man ought to keep aloof from the venomous snake and tiger. There is nothing to fear of death that comes of its own accord Fear of devils and ghosts is a superstition based on imagination *Pravṛtti*, wrong action and fear lead man into bondage *Nivṛtti*, right action and fearlessness lead man to *moksha* The *Sāttvika buddhi* is able to

senses योगेन *yogena* by yoga अव्यभिचारिण्या *avyabhicāriṇyā* unswerving धृतिः *dhṛtiḥ* firmness सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha सात्त्विकी *sāttviki* Sattvika

**The unswerving firmness by which, through yoga, the functions of the mind, the Prana and the senses are regulated, that firmness, O Partha, is Sattvika. 33**

*Dhṛti* means firmness. It also means fortitude or resolve. This virtue is indispensable to him who has chosen to live a spiritual life. Again, as one advances in the ethical and spiritual life *Dhṛti* in that one becomes pronounced in its details. The diverging sunbeams may be made to converge again. That gathered up brilliance directed on anything, is capable of providing greater revelation of that thing. *Dhṛti* is akin to this. Knowledge and action converged into one and increased in the capacity is termed as firmness. Yoga fosters *Dhṛti*. As one advances in yoga, fortitude develops in that one as a matter of course. The mind, the *Prāṇa* and the senses of the yogi become increasingly acute and efficacious. The benign part of this great potentiality is that these sharpened faculties are all utilized in the service of the Paramatman. That is to say, all the feelings and cogitations of the mind are devoted to the adoration of the Almighty. The *Prāṇa* is the life-energy. The aspirant has no other motive in life than directing it to the glory of the Lord. The functions of the senses are all dedicated to His worship in as many ways as possible.

A thread is made up of innumerable fibres. Even so *dhṛti* is the outcome of the combined sublimated

बुद्धि *buddhiḥ* intellect सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha राजसी *rājasī* Rājasika

**The intellect that makes a distorted grasp of dharma and adharma, of what ought to be done, and what ought not to be done — that, O Partha is Rajasika.** **31**

The reflection of a thing in a disturbed water is not even, it gets distorted Similarly the acts of dharma and good and conducive undertakings prescribed in the *Sāstrās* do not appear in their true light to a man of *Rajasika* disposition His intellect makes a distorted reading of good and holy acts Duryodhana challenged and enticed Yudhishthira into gambling which is an evil practice He usurped the kingdom and drove his cousins to the necessity of waging a war Duryodhana felt that his doings were all acts of dharma while they were actually acts of *adharma*

A man endowed with the *Rajasika* intellect is capable of turning out enormous work But his evil genius taints all his doings Let it be supposed that two neighbours enter into a joint effort in agriculture or trade or industry and that one of the two is imbued with a *Rajasika* nature No doubt, the endeavours of the *Rajasika* man would be more than those of the other, his partner But his evil understanding would be ever working at exploiting the partner. He may go to the extent of ruining the other In litigation nobody can equal him He is an adept in trying to convert truth into falsehood and vice versa. He delights in foul ways Righteous

*Purushārtha* or the ideal in life is four-phased. The phases are *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *moksha*. Conforming to the law of life is *dharma*. Practical training in this respect is imparted in the *Brahmacharya Aśrama* or the period of tutelage. The mature man learns to earn wealth and enjoy the pleasure that life provides. These two phases are *artha* and *kāma* respectively. *Preyas* comprises of all the first three phases. *Dhrti* mentioned in the previous stanza leads the aspirant to *Sreyas* culminating in *moksha* or liberation. The *Sāttvika* man alone is competent for it. The *Rajasika* man has scope in dharma, *artha* and *kāma* to have all his earthly desires fulfilled.

The attachment to dharma is the best of all, if man cannot help being attached. Nobody was so much drawn to it as the king Yudhishthira was; therefore his case is the model for all. His clinging to dharma had no ulterior motive. He practised dharma for its own sake. And dharma in its turn protected him all through.

To the *Rajasika* man the practice of dharma is a safe and sure investment. He expects that the good he does is returned to him with compound interest both here and in the hereafter. He is firm in that belief. Therefore with pleasure he goes on doing a good turn here and a good turn there.

All the worldly attachments may be brought under two broad headings-love of property and love of pleasure. With what firmness man holds on to money may be noticed all over the world. Renounc-

vagrant seems to him the best thing that he can do. There are grown up people who think that industry is purposeless and that a life of ease and repose is prudential They hold that the hard working ones do not know of the joy of quietism Enquiry into the spiritual aspect of life is distasteful to them It appears to them that the study of Vedanta and the practice of it may take place in the evening of life, any early thought bestowed on them is premature and purposeless, is their view They delight in derogatory talks about others and waste their time in slander The virtuous appear bad and the vicious good in their eyes Virile body-building games and exercises do not appeal to them, instead, a slothful sedentary pastime like a play at cards engages them day and night Without the least compunction, they present themselves uninvited at parties and entertainments The *Tamasika* intellect guides people in all these irregular ways.

The grades in the firmness of mind are being described now —

धृत्या यया धारयते मनः प्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः ।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३३

धृत्या यया धार्-अय-ते मन प्र अन-इन्द्रिय-क्रिया ।
योगेन अ वि-अभि-चारिण्या धृति सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥

*dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate manaḥ prānendriya kriyāḥ* ।
*yogenā 'vyabhicārinyā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha sāttviki* ॥

धृत्या *dhrtyā* by firmness यया *yayā* (by) which धारयते *dhārayate* holds मन प्राण इन्द्रियक्रिया *manah prāna indriya kriyāḥ* the functions of the mind, the Prana and the

*yayā svapnaṁ bhayaṁ śokaṁ viṣādaṁ madam eva ca* ।
*na vimuñcati durmedhā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī* ॥

यया *yayā* by which स्वप्नम् *svapnaṁ* sleep भयम् *bhayaṁ* fear शोकम् *śokaṁ* grief विषादम् *viṣādaṁ* despair मदम् *madaṁ* conceit एव *eva* indeed च *ca* and न *na* not विमुञ्चति *vimuñcati* abandons दुर्मेधा *durmedhā* a stupid man धृतिः *dhṛtiḥ* firmness सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha तामसी *tāmasī* Tamasika (dark)

**That by which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despair and also conceit, that firmness, O Partha, is Tamasika.** 35

*Tamas* and ignorance are interrelated. Sleep and insentience are alike. A dream being vague, it is ignored as a part of sleep. Day-dreamers are not uncommon in society, given as they are to *Tamas*. In their case, there is hardly any difference between their wakeful engagements and dreamy visions, as there is no firmness at all in any of their doings. Neither does the world derive any benefit from their undertakings.

The blind king Dhrtarashtra is a typical example of a man of *Tamasika* firmness. His blindness was the physical symbol of the lack of discrimination and forethought. And his sons, Duryodhana and others, befitted his make up. For, evils are all born of ignorance. This blind king was inordinately attached to the empire though he was physically unfit to reign. The fear lest the empire should slip out of the hands of his sons, lurked in his heart. Hearing of the atrocities perpetrated by his unscrupulous sons, he was very much grieved. Still, he took no stern

activities of the mind, the *Prāna* and the senses. The fibres at the end of a thread ought to be twisted to convergence in order to pass it through the eye of a needle But if that eye be blocked with dirt, the pointed thread would bend instead of passing through it And this is due to lack of stiffness in the thread. But the *dhrti* of the yogi is as pointed as the end of a thread and as stiff and penetrating as a sharp needle. Such a carefully cultured *dhrti* is dedicated by the yogi for the benign invocation of Iswara. It is in no way prostituted for any other purpose. As the needle of a compass always points to the north, the resolve of the yogi is ever directed to the Lord. It is therefore unswerving. This *dhrti* is *Sāttvika* in its make. It leads the *sadhaka* to the Supreme

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३४

यया तु धर्म-काम-अर्थान् धृत्या धारय-ते अर्जुन ।
प्र-सङ्गेन फल-आकाङ्क्षी धृति सा पार्थ राजसी ॥

*yayā tu dharma kāmārthān dhṛtyā dhārayate 'rjuna* ।
*prasangena phalākānksī dhrtih sā pārtha rājasī* ॥

यया *yayā* which तु *tu* but धर्मकामअर्थान् *dharma kāma arthān* Dharma, desire and wealth धृत्या *dhrtyā* by firmness धारयते *dhārayate* holds अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna प्रसङ्गेन *prasangena* from attachment फलाकांक्षी *phalākānksī* desirous of the fruit of action धृतिः *dhrtih* firmness सा *sā* that पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha राजसी *rājasī* Rajasika

**But the firmness, O Arjuna, by which one holds fast to Dharma, Kama and Artha, desirous of the fruit of each from attachment, that firmness, O Partha, is Rajasika. 34**

सुखम् *sukhaṁ* pleasure तु *tu* indeed इदानीम् *idānīṁ* now त्रिविधम् *trividhaṁ* threefold शृणु *śṛṇu* hear मे *me* me भरतर्षभ *bharatarṣabha* O best of the Bharatas अभ्यासात् *abhyāsāt* from practices रमते *ramate* rejoices यत्र *yatra* in which दुःखान्तम् *duḥkhāntaṁ* the end of pain च *ca* and निगच्छति *nigacchati* attains to

**And now hear from Me, O chief of the Bharatas, the three kinds of happiness. That in which a man comes to rejoice by long practice and in which he reaches the end of his sorrow; 36**

It is the search for happiness that gives impetus to life. There is no being in any region, that does not want happiness. Immeasurable is the effort exerted by beings in this direction. Still it is not the same measure of happiness that all obtain. Like a flash of lightning it appears before a few, but before they behold it all, it disappears. Still the search does not stop and cannot be stopped. It goes on endlessly. There are the others to whom the enjoyment of happiness is like pouring water into a leaky pot, which knows no filling up. As it is being sought after from the world, it vanishes away into oblivion. Still the attempt to enjoy happiness goes on endlessly. Hope of success somehow sustains life. But there are a rare few whose experience of happiness is a unique phenomenon. Like the waxing moon, their joy is ever on the increase. They become heirs to unobstructed delight bordering on blessedness. The cause behind the variation in the enjoyment of happiness is worth a study.

ing food and sleep, comfort and rest, man toils for money day and night Parting with kith and kin, he goes on to distant lands if there are prospects of adding to his wealth If the hard-earned fortune be lost somehow, it is worse than death to the grabber thereof

The *Rajasika* man's attachment to *kāma* or pleasure is equally vehement In fact, all beings are in search of joy and pleasure Clinging to life on earth is all due to the enjoyment derived from it The resolute attempts made are all for the enjoyment of pleasure The modes of obtaining the pleasures provided by Nature may vary with beings, but the end is the same to one and all It is no exaggeration to state that many a man stakes life itself in his quest for enjoyment The firmness with which the *Rajasika* man seeks property and pleasure is to be admired, because it is his way of making life a fulfilment In course of time he is bound to learn the lesson that this quest has to be made for the Imperishable and not the perishable

If drinking water and nice eatables be kept in the room occupied by a patient suffering from malignant fever would he refrain from partaking of those things? Will a sensuous man contain himself when he finds himself in the midst of several objects of senses left at his disposal? He is sure to deviate from the path of devotion and indulge in sense pleasure

— Sri Ramakrishna

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३५

यया स्वप्नम् भयम् शोकम् विषादम् मदम् एव च ।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥

create favourable impression at first sight; but with continued acquaintance they become congenial. The *Jivatman* has been used to the life in the body and the senses in his previous births. His switching on now to the control of the senses, detachment from the body and meditation on the glory of Atman—all these practices seem to him strange and painful. But as he perseveres in them he comes to know that his plenitude is in the Self and not in the mundane. He was a fish out of water when he lived in the senses. He is now a fish got back into water due to his taking to spiritual life.

He who desires to live a spiritual life may easily come to know of its merits by observing the life of a yogi and that of another given to sensuality. How the one makes and the other mars life stand self-revealed. Though hard to practise, self-control alone is the path to happiness.

Man gets purified in body and mind as he progresses in the path of spirituality. Purification of the mind is more important than the purification of the body. A purified heart is like a translucent glass, revealing a fundamental truth in regard to life. Happiness or bliss is actually in the Self and not in the non-Self. The realization of this truth sends the *sadhaka* into raptures. His bliss becomes abiding. The *sādhanā* that started as a hard task culminates in supreme happiness. And this is possible to the *Sāttvika* man alone.

In the old days the priests of the temple of Govinda at Jayapuri were celibates and therefore spiritually very powerful. The Raja of the place once sent for those priests; but they

action against his unworthy sons. Pondering over the ill-fame to which he was exposed, he became overwhelmed with despair. Still, he was not prepared to be guided by the counsel of Bhishma, Drona and Sri Krishna; for the conceit that he was the monarch over all of them lay concealed in his heart. The firmness of king Dhrtarashtra was verily steeped in *Tamas* and therefore producing nothing good.

There are in this world at all times innumerable people who are of the mould of Dhrtarashtra. What their ancestors have bequeathed to them is their sole property. They are incapable of adding to it. Neither discrimination nor right understanding is found in them. Endeavour is unknown to them. They are blind of mind if not of body. Their chief occupation is to eat and sleep away their time. The fear is there in them that their moneys are all expended and nothing earned. After exhausting the whole of their resources they come to grief in their helplessness. They who wallowed once in money now wallow in the mud of despondency. Chewing the cud of their past opulence, they cherish themselves with nothing but conceit. Stupid as they are, this is the wretched life that they carry on. The firmness of these people is all born of *Tamas*.

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥ ३६

सुखम् तु इदानीम् त्रि - विधम् शृ - णु मे भरत - ऋषभ ।
अभि - आसात् रमते यत्र दुःख - अन्तम् च नि - गच्छति ॥

*sukham tv idānīṁ trividhaṁ śṛṇu me bharatarṣabha* ।
*abhyāsād ramate yatra duḥkhāntaṁ ca nigacchati* ॥

The happiness that is obtained from the contact of the senses with their objects, gets converted into poison and eats into the personality of the enjoyer. Consequently the strength and stamina of the man wane away. He is not able to discharge his duties efficiently. The body loses its comeliness. Senility sets in all too early. Instead of growth, there takes place a deterioration of the intellectual capacity of the man. Spiritual sagacity in him fades away. Dharma unconsciously gives place to *adharma*. The man's career gets corrupted. Like water poured into a leaky pot, his happiness slips away as quickly as it is sought. Hellishness haunts him instead.

Mythology has it that the Devas and the Asuras churned the ocean of life, allegorically presented as the ocean of milk. The blessings and the amenities such as education, wealth, means of transport, ornaments, wholesome food and the gifts from Nature – all these were obtained in plenty. These boons are all clothed in theological language as Saraswati, Lakshmi, Airavata, Kaustubha and Kamadhenu. The participants in this great project enjoyed in full measure the happy results of their ardent endeavours. But every enjoyment has its retribution. It comes as action and reaction. None can resist it. Death is the recompense for life. The love of life reacts as the dread of death. The former is liked as nectar and the latter hated as poison. As the ultimate result of embracing life, its counterpart death made its appearance as a dreadful poison before the Devas and Asuras. Not being prepared for

*Abhyāsa* or practice is a powerful weapon to modify man's mode of life The utility of the physical exercise is self-evident The culture of the mind, however, is more consequential. What is called an inherent trait is nothing other than persistent practice A change of individuality ensues a change of practice It holds true even in the case of animals But practice brief and sporadic does not succeed Prolongation of it has a far reaching effect Elimination of sorrow and attainment of abiding happiness are possible by long practice

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥ ३७

यत् तत् अग्रे विषम् इव परिणामे अ-मृत-उपमम् ।
तत् सुखम् सात्त्विकम् प्र-उक्तम् आत्म(न्) बुद्धि प्र-साद जम् ॥

*yat tad agre visam iva parināme 'mrtopamam* ।
*tat sukham sāttvikam proktam ātmabuddhiprasādajam*

यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that अग्रे *agre* at first विषम् *visam* poison इव *iva* like परिणामे *parināme* in the end अमृत उपमम् *amrta upamam* like nectar तत् *tat* that सुखम् *sukham* pleasure सात्त्विकम् *sāttvikam* Sattvika प्रोक्तम् *proktam* is declared (to be) आत्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् *ātma buddhi prasādajam* born of the purity of one's own mind due to self-realization

**That which is like poison at first, but like nectar at the end; that happiness is said to be Sattvika, born of the translucence of intellect due to Self-realization.**

To a beginner swimming seems as dreadful as death, but the same becomes delightful to him after he picks it up. Strangers and strange places do not

**That happiness which deludes the self both at the beginning and at the end and which arises from sleep, sloth and miscomprehension — that is declared to be Tamasika.** 39

A man derives happiness from intoxicants that make him forget the miseries of the world temporarily. But this happiness is wrought with misery in the procurement of the stuff, in the consumption of it in privacy, in being exposed to ridicule when tipsy and in getting sunk in spirit after its effect is over. The lazy man who seeks to maintain himself with borrowed money meets with the same fate. His happiness is marred while borrowing, while expending and while trying to clear the debt with great effort. Sleep and repose are necessary to all embodied beings. There is immense happiness too in indulging in them. But the *Sāttvika* and *Rajasika* men shake off sleep and sloth at the call of duty. Whereas the *Tamasika* man delights in prolonged sleep and in dozing for hours together. But this happiness is nullified by the neglect of duty, by the pricks of conscience and by the derision of the active people. The *Tamasika* man suffers from miscomprehension in regard to the means of the procurement of happiness. Like a flash of lightning his happiness comes and goes.

The hemp-smoker believes that his inebriation is a form of spiritual ecstasy. But it is nothing of the kind. He deludes himself in his indolence into such a belief.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

refused to respond to the summons. They suggested instead that the Raja might go to them. Subsequently the priests got married and became familymen each with a few children. Then they would repair to the Raja every now and then on one plea or another. For, the favour and patronage of the Raja was required for their family affairs. Poor priests, what else could they do with their wives and children to look after! When a man becomes a slave to lust, he falls and becomes a slave to man also, losing his happiness thereby.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

It is the sense-control that, like the waxing moon, fosters steady happiness. The man who masters his senses is slave to none in any region. He blooms in immortal bliss.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ ३८

विषय-इन्द्रिय-सम्-योगात् यत् तत् अग्रे अ-मृत-उपमम् ।
परिणामे विषम् इव तत् सुखम् राजसम् स्मृ-तम् ॥

*viṣayendriyasamyogād yat tad agre 'mṛtopamam* ।
*pariṇāme viṣam iva tat sukham rājasam smṛtam* ॥

विषय इन्द्रिय संयोगात् *visaya indriya samyogāt* from the contact of the sense-organ with the object यत् *yat* which तत् *tat* that अग्रे *agre* at first अमृत उपमम् *amṛta upamam* like nectar परिणामे *pariṇāme* in the end विषम् *viṣam* poison इव *iva* like तत् *tat* that सुखम् *sukham* pleasure राजसम् *rājasaṁ* Rajasika स्मृतम् *smṛtam* is declared

**That happiness which arises from the contact of the senses and their objects and which like nectar at first but like poison at the end—it is held to be Rajasika. 38**

the Creator is the foremost among the *Jivatmans*. His functional status is the greatest; but he is not a liberated soul. In other words, he is also involved in the Gunas. Creation by him is impossible except with the Gunas as the material. The greatest power that he is endowed with is called the *Prakriti laya* or the identification with the Cosmos. And his distinction is that he is not bound to be born again. He is having his final reincarnation. At the close of the prevailing *kalpa* or eon, he enters the *krama mukti* or the gradual liberation. Then he gets beyond the Gunas.

The *Sadhaka* has to struggle hard against the base nature. It is after a prolonged endeavour that he gets into *samadhi*, in which no trace of ego is left. The attainment of *samadhi* is not as easy as one would have it. The ego born of the three Gunas does not disappear easily. We are born in the world repeatedly because of the persistence of ego.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The ways and means of liberation are now expounded :—

The Fourfold Caste Explained — 41-48

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥ ४१

ब्राह्मण-क्षत्रिय-विशाम् शूद्राणाम् च पर-म्-तप ।
कर्माणि प्र-वि-भज्-तानि स्व-भाव-प्र-भवैः गुणैः ॥

*brāhmaṇakṣatriyaviśāṁ śūdrāṇāṁ ca paraṁtapa* ।
*karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāvaprabhavair guṇaiḥ* ॥

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशाम् *brāhmaṇa kṣatriya viśām* of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas शूद्राणाम् *śūdrāṇām*

this consequence they ran in despair to the regions above and below to escape, but escape was impossible Life that seemed inviting not long ago took a turn and appeared bitterly painful In sorrow and dismay they repaired to the Lord Siva and sought refuge in Him And He in compassion consumed the devastating poison and saved the beings that surrendered themselves to Him The great God Siva is renowned as Tyagaraja or the Lord of renunciation He is the embodiment of self-control Death is not where Siva is Therefore they who took refuge in Him were saved from death The principle is that self-control and renunciation are the means to immortality Renouncing the *Rajasika* happiness, the *sadhaka* should go to the *Sāttvika* happiness He should finally transcend it too and merge in the Bliss Beyond

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ ३९

यत् अग्र च अनु बन्धे च सुखम् मोहनम आत्मन ।
निद्रा-आलस्य-प्र-माद्-उत्थम् तत् तामसम् उद्-आ-हृ-तम् ॥

*yad agre cā 'nubandhe ca sukham mohanam ātmanaḥ* ।
*nidrālasya pramādottham tat tāmasam udāhṛtam* ॥

यत् *yat* which अग्रे *agre* at first च *ca* and अनुबन्धे *anubandhe* in the sequel च *ca* and सुखम् *sukham* pleasure मोहनम् *mohanam* delusive आत्मन *ātmanaḥ* of the self निद्रा आलस्य प्रमाद उत्थम् *nidrā ālasya pramāda uttham* arising from sleep, indolence and heedlessness तत् *tat* that तामसम् *tāmasam* Tamasika उदाहृतम् *udāhṛtam* is declared

or beings are alike in the Cosmos. Going back to sameness is going back to destruction, a state unwanted by beings. Creation proceeds on the basis of differentiating one from another. Limbs in the body vary with their functional differences. Bodies vary; species vary; attempts vary; attainments vary. There is a grandeur in the infinite vàrieties exhibited by Nature. The omnipotence of the Lord stands self-explained in this way. Infinite scope is provided in Nature for the low to evolve into the high. Life fulfils itself by attempting and attaining the high, stage by stage. *Varṇa dharma* is nothing other than a reading of this plan of Nature at all levels in general and at the human level in particular.

The distinctiveness of each *varṇa* as evinced by its *svadharma* is delineated as follows :—

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४२

शमः दमः तपः शौचम् क्षान्तिः आर्जवम् एव च ।
ज्ञानम् वि-ज्ञानम् आस्तिक्यम् ब्रह्म-कर्म स्व-भाव-जम् ॥

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucaṁ kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca* ।
*jñānaṁ vijñānam āstikyaṁ brahmakarma svabhāvajam*

शमः *śamaḥ* serenity दमः *damaḥ* self-restraint तपः *tapaḥ* austerity शौचम् *śaucaṁ* purity क्षान्तिः *kṣāntiḥ* forgiveness आर्जवम् *ārjavaṁ* uprightness एव *eva* even च *ca* and ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* knowledge विज्ञानम् *vijñānaṁ* realization आस्तिक्यम् *āstikyaṁ* belief in God ब्रह्मकर्म *brahma karma* the duties of Brahmanas स्वभावजम् *svabhāvajaṁ* born of nature

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥ ४०

न तत् अस्-ति पृथिव्याम् वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।
सत्त्वम् प्र-कृति-जै. मुच्-तम् यत् एभिः (अ)स्-यात् त्रिभिः गुणैः ॥

*na tad asti pṛthivyāṁ vā divi deveṣu vā punaḥ* ।
*sattvam prakṛtijair muktam yad ebhiḥ syāt tribhir guṇaiḥ* ॥

न *na* not तत् *tat* that अस्ति *asti* is पृथिव्याम् *pṛthivyāṁ* on the earth वा *vā* or दिवि *divi* in heaven देवेषु *deveṣu* among the Devas वा *vā* or पुनः *punaḥ* again सत्त्वम् *sattvam* being प्रकृतिजैः *prakṛtijaiḥ* born of Prakriti मुक्तम् *muktam* freed यत् *yat* which एभिः *ebhiḥ* from these स्यात् *syāt* may be त्रिभि. *tribhiḥ* from three गुणैः *guṇaiḥ* by qualities

**There is no being on earth, or again in heaven among the Devas, that is liberated from the three Gunas, born of Prakriti. 40**

The three Gunas and Prakriti are identical. The former are taken into account when distinction is to be made among the attainments of the *Jivatmans*. But as the aggregate substance, the Gunas and Prakriti are one and the same. From a blade of grass up to Brahma the Creator, all the *Jivatmans* are bound by the Gunas of Prakriti. Be they the human beings or the celestial beings, they are all in bondage until they transcend the three Gunas. The continuity of births and deaths is inevitable to them when they are in the fetters of Prakriti. Their rebirths range high and low conforming to the predominance in them of the varying Gunas. Brahma,

knowledge without God-realization avails nothing. *Astikya* is more than a formal belief in God and in the hereafter. It is a burning faith in the divine aspect of life and in its eternity. A *Brāhmaṇa* holds himself as a pilgrim on earth and not as one belonging to it. His treasure is not of the mundane but of the divine. A simple living with a bare earthly possession distinguishes him from the others. To decorate the body is not in his way. While living in the body he is not of the body. He loves all beings alike and claims a universal kinship. And these are the marks of a *Brāhmaṇa*. As the *Brāhmaṇās* increase in number, the ethical and spiritual standards of the society go up.

The life of renunciation and self-dedication that Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa lived is the model of and an ideal for a *Brāhmaṇa*.

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ ४३

शौर्यम् तेजः धृतिः दाक्ष्यम् युद्धे च अपि अ-पला(परा)अयनम् ।
दानम् ईश्वर-भावः च क्षात्रम् कर्म स्व-भाव-जम् ॥

*śauryaṁ tejo dhṛtir dākṣyaṁ yuddhe cā 'py apalāyanam*
*dānam īśvarabhāvaś ca kṣātraṁ karma svabhāvajam* ॥

शौर्यम् *śauryaṁ* prowess तेजः *tejaḥ* splendour धृतिः *dhṛtiḥ* firmness दाक्ष्यम् *dākṣyaṁ* dexterity युद्धे *yuddhe* in battle च *ca* and अपि *api* also अपलायनम् *apalāyanaṁ* not flying दानम् *dānaṁ* generosity ईश्वरभावः *īśvarabhāvaḥ* lordliness च *ca* and क्षात्रम् *kṣātraṁ* of Kshatriyas कर्म *karma* action स्वभावजम् *svabhāvajaṁ* born of the nature

of Sudras च *ca* as also परंतप *paramtapa* O Parantapa कर्माणि *karmāṇi* duties प्रविभक्तानि *pravibhaktāni* are distributed स्वभावप्रभवैः *svabhāva prabhavaiḥ* born of their own nature गुणैः *guṇaiḥ* by qualities

**The duties of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, as also of Sudras, O scorcher of foes, are distributed according to the Gunas born of their own nature. 41**

*Svabhāva* is another name attributed to Prakriti or the *Māyā Sakti* inherent in Iswara. This cosmic reality is constituted of the three Gunas. Variation in karma is based on the variation of the Gunas. Karma in its turn leaves its *samskāra* or impress on the mind. As the *samskārās* get themselves refined, they go to modify the nature or *svabhāva* of the individual. That karma and *svabhāva* are inseparable is a fact ever to be borne in mind. The *varṇa* or the grade of evolution of a *Jivatman* is based on his *svabhāva* or nature. So it is possible to know of the *varṇa* of an individual from his *svabhāva* and his karma. Of the two, the *svabhāva* is subtle and hard to be observed. A man of intuition alone can see into it just as we all cognize the contents of a glass case. Karma, on the other hand, is gross. It is possible for us to get at the *varṇa* of a man from the karma to which he is given. The way in which a man makes use of his life is a sure indicator of the *varṇa* of that man.

Why has God made some great and others small? —is a stock question. But this question is meaningless to the knower of the fundamental. Creation is impossible without differentiation. No two things

bound to oppose the evils in society. Callousness and pacifism are no marks of a champion of dharma. A hero is he who knows no fear of opposing an enemy decidedly stronger than he. *Tejas* or vigour is his who is ever jubilant in the discharge of his duty. *Dhrti* is the frame of mind which is firm and dominant even when overpowered by the enemy. *Dākshyam* or resourcefulness is the ingenuity of the mind which hits upon the right place, right time and right strategy in war and peace as quick reaction to the changing situations. A sudden crisis causes no confusion in the mind of a man gifted with this virtue. Sometimes a strategic retreat is prudent for a later decisive offensive. But on no account should a *Kshatriya* fly from battle for fear. Death is any day better than a vegetating life of slavery.

*Dāna* or generosity is the art of administration allowing the maximum facilities and prosperity to people. With a parental attitude the *Kshatriya* should be ever intent on providing for public weal rather than on extorting for private ends. *Isvarabhāva* is lordliness. Preventing people from lawlessness and guiding them to be law-abiding are the outcome of this gift in a *Kshatriya.* Leadership of this kind comes automatically to one resolved to serve the people. The spirit of renunciation is the guiding factor in this respect. The *Kshatriya* is the protector of society. By self-discipline and self-dedication he rises equal to this divine duty. The spiritual culture of the *Brāhmaṇa* and the

**Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, and also uprightness, knowledge, realization, belief in a hereafter — these are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of their own nature. 42**

He is a *Brāhmaṇa* who is imbued with qualities all conducive to a spiritual life. Self-control and self-discipline are as natural and agreeable to him as water is to a duckling. His mind being turned to sublime and supramundane concerns, serenity is the norm with him. He cannot afford to be flippant with trifles. Sense-control is a moral warfare to the ordinary man; but to the *Brāhmana* it is a matter of course. Sublimation of the body, mind and speech is austerity. This merit finds its full expression in this spiritual man. A thing that retains its original state is said to preserve its purity. The spiritual man is fixed in the feeling that he is Atman. His body and the senses behave in tune with this divine feeling. Therefore purity and the *Brāhmana* are one and the same. The even tenor of the spiritual life of a god-man is bound to be affected once in a way at least by the intrusion of the worldly people. But he is never affected thereby nor does he ever think of retaliating or resisting. Calm forgiveness is his way. His thought, word and deed being ever directed to the welfare of all, there is uprightness in every bit of his action. He is as trustworthy to people as the mother is to her baby. The *Brāhmaṇa* begins his life with scriptural knowledge in regard to God and His creation; and he fulfils it with intuitive knowledge or God-realization. Any amount of scriptural

society. The time-honoured means for this are agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. But in course of time, tapping the resources of nature has developed marvellously; industry has grown to the point of perplexing its progenitor. And these are all the occupations of the *Vaisya*.

All craftsmen, artisans, job-workers, and technicians are classified as *Vaisyās*. The modern practitioners such as the lawyers and the doctors are also to be treated as *Vaisyās*. The dharma of these people is to serve society through their calling; but if they exploit people they become offenders morally, if not legally. The preparation and the sale of intoxicants are not sanctioned by dharma unless they are handled as medicines.

The *Sūdra* is he who can only render physical labour, but who is incapable of setting up a calling of his own. Whoever gets himself employed as a paid lower subordinate to somebody, is a *Sūdra*, dependent on others for his livelihood. A clerk who merely does an intellectual work as directed, is also a *Sūdra*. The labour class people come under this classification. But all the paid men are not *Sūdrās*. A school master with the right frame of mind is a *Brāhmaṇa*. A government officer is a *Kshatriya*. The rank and file in the army are all *Kshatriyās*. People who sell their labour and independence and those who take bribes and tips are all *Sūdrās*. He whose life is centred in the body and who has no other higher outlook in life is a *Sūdra*.

**Heroism, vigour, firmness, resourcefulness, not flying from battle, generosity and lordliness are the duties of the Kshatriyas born of their own nature. 43**

In the scale of spiritual evolution the *Kshatriya* comes next to the *Brāhmana.* While the topmost man is the embodiment of divinity, the second best man is the embodiment of dharma. While the *Brahma rishi* gives all attention to the godliness in man, the *Rāja rishi* pays all attention to the manliness in man. It is only after being an ideal man that one becomes a god-man. The ideal man is found in the *Kshatriya,* who is devoted to putting the earthly life of man in perfect order. The literal meaning of the word *Kshatriya* is he who always protects others from hurt and injury क्षतात् त्रायते *Kṣatāt trāyate.* The *Kshatriya* has dedicated his body for the good of the world. While in that noble endeavour his body may be hurt or may even be destroyed. The destruction of the body is no loss to him; but reconciliation with *adharma* is the worst loss that he sustains. Bhishma's life illustrates the relative value that a *Kshatriya* gives to his bodily existence and to his frame of mind. While his body was being hurt to the core, his mind remained pinned to the ideal. All the spiritually evolving souls require to be processed in the *Kshatriya* mould before they can aspire to the *Brāhmaṇa* mould. The intensity of the training may vary but the process cannot be avoided.

Just as the farmer is obliged to eradicate the pest that attacks his crop, the *Kshatriya* is in duty

the *Sūdra* dharma. The dharmas of all these limbs are of equal importance and necessity. The same is the case with society too.

Among the four great Yogas, the Karma Yoga has the characteristics of the *Sūdra* dharma. The Raja Yoga contributes to the *sadhaka* what the *Vaisya* contributes to the society. The functions of the Bhakti Yoga and the *Kshatriya* are alike. The Jnana Yoga provides to the aspirant what the *Brāhmaṇa* does to society. As the Lord equates all the four Yogas, He equates all the four *Varṇās* also, they being the component of his Cosmic form. An ideal *sadhaka* is he who embraces all the four Yogas putting them all on a par. An ideal society is that in which the citizens are given training in the duties of all the four *varṇās* and they discharge their duties to the best of their ability.

The *varṇa dharma* is the last word on an ideal social order. India has evolved this system to its perfection. It cuts at the root of the cruel competition with its attendant evils. It offers instead, an attitude of self-dedication crowned with renunciation. Every time India was faithful to this philosophical basis of her social order, she emerged as a heaven on earth. But every time she deviated from this benign principle, she met with a deplorable set back. Her latest fall was due to casteism with its privileges masquerading as *Varṇa Dharma*. But this chimera is shattered and a new spiritual India is at the point of emerging.

earthly resources of the *Vaisya* get themselves harmoniously commingled in the *Kshatriya* who harnesses and utilizes them all for the public welfare

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥ ४४

कृषि-गौरक्ष्य-वाणिज्यम् वैश्य-कर्म स्व भाव-जम् ।
परि-चर्या-आत्मकम् कर्म शूद्रस्य अपि स्व-भाव-जम् ॥

*krsi gauraksya vānijyam vaiśyakarma svabhāvajam* ।
*paricaryātmakam karma śūdrasyā 'pi svabhāvajam* ॥

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यम् *krsi gaurakṣya vānijyam* agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade वैश्यकर्म *vaiśya karma* the duties of Vaisya स्वभावजम् *svabhāvajam* born of the nature परिचर्यात्मकम् *paricaryātmakam* consisting of service कर्म *karma* action शूद्रस्य *śūdrasya* of the Sudra अपि *api* also स्वभावजम् *svabhāvajam* born of the nature

**Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaisyas, born of their own nature; and action consisting of service is the duty of the Sudras born of their own nature.** *44*

Wealth and material resources are also the glories of God in their own way Lakshmi the Goddess of wealth being the spouse of the Lord is pregnant with meaning Life at the physical level is impossible without the material resources Man's life takes its start in that plane only to soar into the higher regions But the bodily sustenance and prosperity are to be maintained, and wealth is a necessity for this purpose. The *Vaisya* is he who creates and distributes the material wealth of the

for a better one, he may thereby prove himself worldly-wise. But that attitude is definitely a hindrance to his spiritual growth. Through his seeming humble *svadharma* he can rise to be a perfect yogi. For, no work is ugly to a *sadhaka*. Any and every work becomes worship when the attitude is sound. The how of it is explained below:—

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥ ४६

यतः प्र-वृत्-तिः भू-तानाम् येन सर्वम् इदम् त(न्)-तम् ।
स्व-कर्मणा तम् अभि-अर्च्-य सिध्-तिम् विन्द-ति मानवः ॥

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ yena sarvam idaṁ tatam ।*
*svakarmaṇā tam abhyarcya siddhiṁ vindati mānavaḥ* ॥

यतः *yataḥ* from whom प्रवृत्तिः *pravṛttiḥ* the evolution भूतानाम् *bhūtānāṁ* of beings येन *yena* by whom सर्वम् *sarvaṁ* all इदम् *idaṁ* this ततम् *tataṁ* is pervaded स्वकर्मणा *sva karmaṇā* with his own duty तम् *taṁ* him अभ्यर्च्य *abhyarcya* worshipping सिद्धिम् *siddhiṁ* perfection विन्दति *vindati* attains मानवः *mānavaḥ* man

**He from whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, man attains perfection.** 46

It is because of the proximity of Iswara that the universe functions uniformly and intelligently. No being is superfluous or useless in this Cosmic setting. By doing his duty properly, every man is contributing his quota to the phenomenal whole. This being the plan, an intelligent man ought to perform his duty as an act of worship of the Lord. When the right attitude is assumed, it aids the purification of the mind. One's *svadharma* proves

The four *varṇās* or grades are all based on the quality of the mind. In all societies and countries these natural classifications can be found. Among four brothers it is possible to find these four *varṇās*. It is also possible to find a group, a clan or a tribe to be given predominantly to any one of the four *varṇās*.

Just as there are the lower classes and the higher classes in a school, the existence of the four *varṇās* in a society is but natural. The plan is for the lower class man to evolve into the higher class. Any artificial obstruction to this natural scheme is injurious. A pupil of the higher class knows the lessons of the lower class. This principle applies to the *varṇās* in society. A *Brāhmaṇa* is he who can discharge the dharmas of all the four *varṇās*. A *Kshatriya* can discharge the dharmas of three *varṇās*. A *Vaisya* can carry out the duties of two *varṇās* while the *Sūdra* can only do his own dharma.

Though there is difference in the attainments of the four *varṇās*, there is no differentiation among their respective dharmas. The dharma of the one is as sacred and conducive to enlightenment as that of the other. A *Sūdra* is as much competent for the practice of yoga as the others are. Almost all the Acharyas have had among their disciples, men who were of mere *Sūdra* calibre to begin with, but who through their devotion rose to the pinnacle of realization. In the human body, the brain does the *Brāhmaṇa* dharma, the heart the *Kshatriya* dharma, the stomach the *Vaisya* dharma and the hands and feet,

has to be peeled off and the shell broken in order to get at the kernel. Similar to this, doing one's duty in the spirit of adoring the Almighty is the means to get at the kernel which is God in the heart of man.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ ४७

श्रेयान् स्व-धर्मः वि-गुणः पर-धर्मात् सु-अनु-(स्था)स्थितात् ।
स्व-भाव-नि-य(म्)-तम् कर्म कुर्वन् न आप्-नो-ति किल्बिषम् ॥

*śreyān svadharmo viguṇaḥ paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt* |
*svabhāvaniyataṁ karma kurvan nā 'pnoti kilbiṣam* ||

श्रेयान् *śreyān* better स्वधर्मः *sva dharmaḥ* one's own duty विगुणः *viguṇaḥ* (though) destitute of merits परधर्मात् *para dharmāt* than the duty of another सु अनुष्ठितात् *su anuṣṭhitāt* (than) well performed स्वभावनियतम् *svabhāva niyataṁ* ordained by his own nature कर्म *karma* action कुर्वन् *kurvan* doing न *na* not आप्नोति *āpnoti* (he) incurs किल्बिषम् *kilbiṣaṁ* sin

**Better is one's own dharma, though imperfect, than the dharma of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin.** 47

The karma that is in tune with a man's disposition is his *svadharma*. Arjuna's case clarifies the issue raised herein. He is ordained by his nature for warfare. Events have driven him to the necessity of waging a righteous war. His duty is to pursue it even if it proves itself disadvantageous to him. If the odds turn against him, even then he is to fight to the finish. It is possible for him to retreat

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥ ४५

स्वे स्वे कर्मणि अभि-र(म्)-तः सम्-सिध्-तिम् लभ्-अते नरः ।
स्व-कर्म-नि-रतः सिध्-तिम् यथा विन्द्-ति तत् शृणु ॥

*sve sve karmany abhiratah samsiddhim labhate narah*
*svakarmaniratah siddhim yathā vindati tac chrnu* ॥

स्वे *sve* in own स्वे *sve* in own कर्मणि *karmani* to duty अभिरतः *abhiratah* devoted संसिद्धिम् *samsiddhim* perfection लभते *labhate* attains नरः *narah* a man स्वकर्म निरतः *sva karma niratah* engaged in his own duty सिद्धिम् *siddhim* perfection यथा *yathā* how विन्दति *vindati* finds तत् *tat* that शृणु *srnu* hear

**Devoted each to his own duty, man attains the highest perfection. How engaged in his own duty, he attains perfection, that do you hear. 45**

To whatever station in life man has made himself competent, that is verily his *svadharma*. He who discharges his *svadharma* jubilantly and efficiently turns out to be a good *sadhaka*. The temporary disgust that Arjuna harboured for his *svadharma* was not born of mature understanding. It was the outcome of a momentary delusion. He who abhors *his duty* can never become great. *A model student* is he who applies himself diligently and delightfully to his studies. He is loyal to the class in which he is placed, so that he may step into a higher class when the time for it comes. It is his *svadharma* to go steadily into the higher classes. This principle however, does not apply to one's position in life. If a scavenger thinks of changing his occupation

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥ ४८

सह-जम् कर्म कौन्तेय स-दोषम् अपि न त्यज्-अ-इत् ।
सर्व-आ-रम्भाः हि दोषेण धूमेन अग्निः इव आ-वृ-ताः ॥

*sahajaṁ karma kaunteya sadoṣam api na tyajet |*
*sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa dhūmenā 'gnir ivā 'vṛtāḥ ||*

सहजम् *sahajaṁ* born together कर्म *karma* action कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya सदोषम् *sadoṣaṁ* with fault अपि *api* even न *na* not त्यजेत् *tyajet* one should abandon सर्वं आरम्भाः *sarva ārambhāḥ* all undertakings हि *hi* for दोषेण *doṣeṇa* by evil धूमेन *dhūmena* by smoke अग्निः *agniḥ* fire इव *iva* like आवृताः *āvṛtāḥ* are enveloped

**One should not abandon, O Kaunteya, the duty to which one is born, though it is attended with evil; for, all undertakings are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke. 48**

A truth reveals itself to him who desists from likes and dislikes and who enquires into karma with an equanimity of mind. There is no karma whatsoever in Nature, which is completely free from evil. We cannot breathe without hurting millions of microbes in the atmosphere. When we eat we deprive another of food or life. An ascetic suspends all bodily activities and practises austerity in a mountain cave. His body fostered by others vegetates thereby, without being useful in its turn. There is no karma completely free from evil. Why should there be then the distinction between vice and virtue? The great ones have advocated virtue and denounced vice. Which among the acts of man, is to be accepted

thereby the means for the gaining of wisdom and for the attainment of Godhood.

The common notion of man is that the worship of the Lord is one thing and that the discharge of one's worldly duty is another thing. Such a man betrays his ignorance of the worship of the Almighty. It is evident that every physical exertion is an aid to the build of the body. A bodily exertion can serve simultaneously both for the build of the body and for the earning of one's livelihood. The same endeavour can next be made to serve three purposes by holding it as an act of the worship of God. The Mahabharata has it that a butcher treated his profession as an outlet for self-expression, for his livelihood, for his service to society and for his adoration of the Lord. Through the discharge of his duty that man matured fully in wisdom. His teachings to an ascetic form a scripture known as the Vyadha Gita–the Butcher's Gita. The idea of eking out an earthly existence is a wretched one, unbecoming a man. This negative attitude should be elevated to the positive one of adoring the Lord with the life that one lives; and that life should be worthy of the Maker. Whatever duty falls to the lot of one is sacred in itself and it should be directed to the glory of the Lord. This attitude would pull him up Godward. He is a yogi who converts his earthly life into the worship of the Lord.

A coconut contains the fibrous sheath outside, the shell inside and the kernel within. The sheath

*asaktabuddhiḥ sarvatra jitātmā vigataspṛhaḥ* ।
*naiṣkarmyasiddhiṁ paramāṁ saṁnyāsenā 'dhigacchati*

असक्तबुद्धिः *asakta buddhiḥ* whose intellect is unattached सर्वत्र *sarvatra* everywhere जितात्मा *jitātmā* who has subdued his self विगतस्पृहः *vigata spṛhaḥ* whose desires have fled नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिम् *naiṣkarmya siddhiṁ* the perfection consisting in freedom from action परमाम् *paramāṁ* the supreme संन्यासेन *saṁnyāsena* by renunciation अधिगच्छति *adhigacchati* (he) attains

**He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who has subdued his self, from whom desire has disappeared, he by renunciation attains the supreme state of freedom from action. 49**

A karma yogi is engaged in intense activities. One form of activity succeeds another even as the hour of the clock succeeds one the other. He seems to know of no rest. This is the spectacle he presents to an onlooker. But what actually he is at the core of his heart requires to be studied. He does not identify himself with any place or residence. Wherever he happens to be placed, is accepted by him as his residence. Or to view it in another way, he does not get attached to any place anywhere. Again, things are being handled in abundance by him. As they come in profusely, even so are they disbursed. No modification of any kind do they produce in the mind of the yogi. Water flows in on one side of a bridge and it flows out on the other side. The bridge is neither the recipient of water nor its distributor; it is unaffected by the flow of the river. The yogi, in that fashion, keeps his mind unaffected by the

from the battle-field and resort to severe austerity in the forest. Imperfect war is better for him than a perfect penance. Death due to opposing the wicked is better for him than life seeking the hereafter.

A man trained for medicine should not choose to become a lawyer on the ground he can plead a case very fluently. It is injurious if one changes one's calling prompted by likes and dislikes, by opportunism and careerist mentality. One's personality gets dissipated thereby. The training that one has received and the time devoted to it are all wasted away. On the other hand, there is a twofold advantage in a man confining himself to his *svadharma*. Firstly, it is as natural to him as water is to fish. He need not unduly strain himself in picking up and in discharging his inherited duty. He executes it almost involuntarily. Secondly, there is the release of consciousness to be directed Godward. He is a yogi who achieves the maximum benefit with the minimum of effort. To make his worldly life a fulfilment and to reach Godhood — these are the ideals set by a yogi for himself. Devotion to *svadharma* is the sure means to the achievement of these objects. All activities are unfailing means to reach Godhood. And that man who swerves not from his *svadharma* gains in constancy. No yoga is possible without constancy.

But should not an aspirant renounce the world and all worldly activities when dispassion and desire for liberation dawn in his mind? This question is answered:—

**Learn from Me in brief, O Kaunteya, how reaching such perfection, he attains to Brahman, that supreme consummation of knowledge. 50**

*Siddhi* or perfection is the state to attain which everything in Nature is incessantly struggling. The very plan and purpose of Nature tend towards this end. The sentient and the insentient are all shaping themselves only for perfection. Carbon that remains buried under earth for ages turns into diamond, a most precious gem. That this great possibility is potent in a piece of charcoal cannot ordinarily be thought of. Time and environment are the factors that contribute themselves for this great miracle to take place. Man delights in helping himself to a luscious apple. The perfection that this fruit has undergone is the cause of the delight of man. But he does not ponder over the process that the apple plant has undergone to bring about this perfection. Sun, rain, dew, fog, water, frost, soil, manure, air - all these have contributed their quota to the apple and have aided its progress towards perfection. All lives are struggling in their own way to reach perfection in their respective spheres.

But of all the attempts of all beings for perfection, that of man enjoys a special merit. The *siddhi* of the other things and beings is confined to the material plane. Therefore, it is prone to nullification. A diamond for example may again be reduced to a bit of carbon. Honey, nectar and ambrosia turn again into dirt. But the *siddhi* that is open to man leads him to immortality, to immutation and to

as virtue and which rejected as vice? Among the fuels, that which smokes too much is bad and that *which smokes less is good* Among *the karmas* that which is attendant with more evil than good, is vice, and that other in which there is more good than evil, is virtue It is in accordance with place, time and circumstance, that a karma becomes good or bad. The knowing ones ought to discern and do the good karma only

But the yogi has his own criterion. He discharges his duty as an act of worship of the Lord. A pilgrim who halts at a wayside rest house, cooks his food there with the fuel available and proceeds further He does not delay on the way for want of good fuel The attitude of the yogi is very much like this He performs for the sake of the Lord, that karma to which his body is found fit And he acts with the sole motive of reaching the state of Inaction or Atman. The embodied one is obliged to act in a good and useful manner The yogi therefore discharges his *svadharma* as an adoration of the Almighty.

How his act becomes an adoration is further explained —

**Karma Yoga is Karma Sanyasa — 49-57**

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥ ४९

अ-सज्ज्-त-बुद्धिः सर्वत्र जि-त-आत्मा वि ग(म्)-त-स्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्य-सिद्धिम् परमाम् सम्-नि-आसेन अधि-गच्छ-ति ॥

**Learn from Me in brief, O Kaunteya, how reaching such perfection, he attains to Brahman, that supreme consummation of knowledge. 50**

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But of all the attempts of all beings for perfection, that of man enjoys a special merit. The *siddhi* of the other things and beings is confined to the material plane. Therefore, it is prone to nullification. A diamond for example may again be reduced to a bit of carbon. Honey, nectar and ambrosia turn again into dirt. But the *siddhi* that is open to man leads him to immortality, to immutation and to

things of the world. He takes no note of the people drawn to him, of the people indifferent to him and of the people opposed to him. This is the state of the intellect that is unattached everywhere. Thoughts and feelings rise in the minds of the ordinary people even as waves do on the sea. But the mind of the yogi maintains a different state. It is like a waveless sea. This placid state is due to his mastery over the self. Objects of sense-pleasure may be displayed in plenty before an innocent child; but the child does not cast a covetous look at them, because it has not yet developed a desire for them. A yogi also does not behold those objects with any wistful eyes, because he has outgrown all desire for sense-enjoyment. This man who is obviously the doer of great activities is in reality a Sanyasin as his mind is completely unattached, his individuality subdued and his desires utterly annihilated. The state of actionlessness and *Brahmāvastha* are one and the same.

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥ ५०

सिध्-तिम् प्र-आप्-तः यथा ब्रह्म तथा आप्-नोति नि-बोध मे ।
सम्-आसेन एव कौन्तेय नि-(स्था) ष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥

*siddhiṁ prāpto yathā brahma tathā 'pnoti nibodha me*
*samāsenai 'va kaunteya niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā* ॥

सिद्धिम् *siddhim* perfection प्राप्तः *prāptaḥ* attained यथा *yathā* as ब्रह्म *brahma* Brahman तथा *tathā* that आप्नोति *āpnoti* obtains निबोध *nibodha* learn मे *me* of me समासेन *samāsena* in brief एव *eva* even कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya निष्ठा *niṣṭhā* state ज्ञानस्य *jñānasya* of knowledge या *yā* which परा *parā* highest

**Endowed with pure understanding, restraining the self with firmness, turning away from sound and other objects, and abandoning attraction and aversion; 51**

A thing is said to be pure when it is unaffected by extraneous objects. The distilled water is pure because it contains nothing else. The nature of a pure understanding requires to be looked into. It may be compared to a pure and even glass. But, seen through a blue glass, a yellow object appears green. Here, the peculiarity of the instrument of seeing gets itself imposed on the object seen. When seen through a pure colourless glass, yellow remains yellow. The intellect is the instrument of seeing of the *Jivatman*. The defects in the intellect distort the vision obtained by the seer. Purifying the intellect is, therefore, the foremost factor in self-perfection. Dispositions in the forms of attachment and aversion have all to be eliminated. A serene and equipoised intellect fixed on Pure Consciousness is here designated as a pure understanding. Restraining the self results in transcending the body-consciousness. Thought of the body rarely ever crosses the mind of a perfect *sadhaka*. The body clings to him just as the shadow clings to all. Firmness in the attainment of this perfection leads him to *Brahmāvastha*. The external indication of this firmness is the absence of the craving for the bodily requirements such as food and clothing. Further, he is free from attraction and aversion to those few things even, with which he is providentially provided. Simplicity and self-mastery get themselves explained through the life of this *sadhaka*. Moreover :—

Beatitude And this perfection of man is not of the body but of the mind The mind of one man is not like that of another There are as many moulds of mind as there are human beings In the course of countless rebirths, these minds are undergoing modifications influenced by internal promptings and external situations

It is the practice of yoga that chisels the mind of all of its angularities and shapes it into perfection. He is a *siddha* whose mind is cured of all of its defects A pure mind is fit for *Brahma jnāna* That yogi who gains in *Brahma jnāna*, becomes himself Brahman There is no perfection higher than this to be attained This unique attainment is open to the human alone

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥ ५१

बुद्ध्या वि शुद्धया युज्-त धृत्या आत्मानम् नि-यम्-य च ।
शब्द आदीन् विषयान् त्यज्-त्वा राग-द्वेषौ वि उद्-अस्-य च ॥

*buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto dhṛtyā 'tmānam niyamya ca*
*śabdādin viṣayāms tyaktvā rāgadvesau vyudasya ca* ॥

बुद्ध्या *buddhyā* with an intellect विशुद्धया *viśuddhayā* pure युक्त *yuktaḥ* endued धृत्या *dhṛtyā* by firmness आत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self नियम्य *niyamya* controlling च *ca* and शब्दादीन् *śabdādin* sound and other विषयान् *viṣayān* sense objects त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* relinquishing रागद्वेषौ *rāga dvesau* attraction and hatred व्युदस्य *vyud asya* abandoning च *ca* and

he quits it alone. He is a yogi who learns to be alone while in the world.

Both over-eating and under-eating are harmful at the initial stage. But as one advances in age and becomes advanced in yoga, one finds that under-eating is advantageous both to body and mind. Lightness of the former and clarity of the latter are the advantages. The spiritual fervour in the *sadhaka* contributes much to the sustenance of the body and the vigour of the mind. Physical food therefore gets automatically reduced.

The yogi commands a perfect mastery over his speech, body and mind. He speaks but sparingly. No vain words come out from his tongue. Measured speech which is ever to the point, marks him out. The yogi involuntarily reveals an elegance in his demeanour. He is a stranger to doing things by fits and starts. His bodily movements are all purposeful and spare. Above all, the mind of the yogi is ever given to communion with the Self. Vagaries therefore can have no access to it. Calmness and serenity mark it for their own.

He is in his element when absorbed in the thought of God. If any other thought happens to cross his mind, it causes him acute pain. Being engaged in meditation on the Paramatman, is the norm with him.

A novice tries to cultivate *vairāgya* or dispassion to the world. He reflects on the evils of sense-pleasure whenever a passing thought of indulgence makes its appearance in his unwary mind. But a

Beatitude. And this perfection of man is not of the body but of the mind. The mind of one man is not like that of another. There are as many moulds of mind as there are human beings. In the course of countless rebirths, these minds are undergoing modifications influenced by internal promptings and external situations.

It is the practice of yoga that chisels the mind of all of its angularities and shapes it into perfection. He is a *siddha* whose mind is cured of all of its defects. A pure mind is fit for *Brahma jnāna.* That yogi who gains in *Brahma jnāna,* becomes himself Brahman. There is no perfection higher than this to be attained. This unique attainment is open to the human alone.

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥ ५१

बुद्धया वि-शुद्धया युज्-तः धृ-त्वा आत्मानम् नि-यम्-य च ।
शब्द-आदीन् विषयान् त्यज्-त्वा राग-द्वेषौ वि-उद्-अस्-य च ॥

*buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto dhṛtyā 'tmānaṁ niyamya ca*
*śabdādīn viṣayāms tyaktvā rāgadveṣau vyudasya ca* ॥

बुद्ध्या *buddhyā* with an intellect विशुद्धया *viśuddhayā* pure युक्तः *yuktaḥ* endued धृत्या *dhṛtyā* by firmness आत्मानम् *ātmānaṁ* the self नियम्य *niyamya* controlling च *ca* and शब्दादीन् *śabdādīn* sound and other विषयान् *viṣayān* sense-objects त्यक्त्वा *tyaktvā* relinquishing रागद्वेषौ *rāga dveṣau* attraction and hatred व्युदस्य *vyud-asya* abandoning च *ca* and

being established in the Self is the abandonment of egoism.

Thinking of the individuals as physical entities and one individual trying to have an upper hand over the others is violence. He who outgrows this evil is a yogi.

While exercising violence, that individual who succeeds in subduing the others, thinks very highly of himself and lightly of the others. This attitude that he develops is arrogance. The yogi does not run the risk of falling victim to this evil.

*Kāma* or desire is the hankering after sense-pleasure. He who cherishes the senses is a *bhogin* and he who curbs the senses is a yogin. The latter has nothing to do with any base desire.

An obstructed fondness transforms itself into enmity. The yogi who sees divinity in all is given neither to fondness nor to enmity.

Bodily sustenance is not possible without property. The ownership of the body leads to the ownership of the property too. While in the body, the yogi is not of the body; while in possession of the bare necessities of the body, the thought of possession is not in the mind. That trifling property is handled with the same indifference and detachment shown to the body.

Free as the yogi is from ownership of any kind, he is necessarily free from the notion of "mine."

When all the disturbing factors are eliminated from the mind, its resting in peacefulness is a matter

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥ ५२

विविक्त-सेवी लघु-आशी   य(म्)-त-वाक्-काय-मानस. ।
ध्यान-योग-परः नित्यम्   वैराग्यम् सम्-उप-आ-श्रि-त· ॥

*viviktasevī laghvāśī yatavākkāyamānasaḥ* ।
*dhyānayogaparo nityam vairāgyam samupāśritaḥ* ॥

विविक्तसेवी *vivikta sevī* dwelling in solitude लघ्वाशी *laghvāśī* eating but little यतवाक्कायमानसः *yata vāk kāya mānasaḥ* speech, body and mind subdued ध्यानयोगपरः *dhyāna yoga paraḥ* engaged in meditation and concentration नित्यम् *nityam* always वैराग्यम् *vairāgyaṁ* dispassion समुपाश्रितः *samupāśritaḥ* taking refuge in

**Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, speech, body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, endued with dispassion;  52**

Man is a gregarious being. Solitary confinement is a punishment inflicted on him; he may go mad if kept long in segregation. He needs company. Society is the training ground for him to pick up civility. Moving amicably with people is his first and foremost lesson in life. But the yogi turns over a new leaf in life by resorting to solitude. He is to change over from extrovert to introvert. His spiritual growth is all subjective. His delight and relaxation are all in the Self. Company of people is a hindrance to him. He feels out of sorts when pestered by people. The sign of his advancing in yoga is that he chooses to be in solitude. By experience he comes to learn that solitude is to the mind what diet is to the body. Man comes alone into the world and

The *Jnāna* that the baby belongs to that mother and that it is she who has become the baby, is implied in that sweet love. *Jnāna* and *Bhakti* are the obverse and reverse of the same coin of a perfected personality.

An incident clarifies this point further. A benefactor was liberally doling out to all the poor who resorted to him, without even scrutinizing into their merits. But one day he was involuntarily drawn to a lad of fifteen who was found in the midst of a few holy nomads. The boy's physical feature with a scar on his cheek roused the rich man's earnest curiosity. The nomads responded to his enquiry with the information that about twelve years before they picked up that boy lying unconscious on the river bank somewhere in that locality. The benefactor concluded that this in fact was the child of three that he lost in a boat tragedy those twelve years before! The apparently lost son was reclaimed with joy and filial love. Knowing and loving are interrelated, one augmenting the other.

*Bhakti* being involved in *Jnāna* and *Jnāna* being involved in *Bhakti* are but natural. A *Brahma jnāni* is simultaneously a *bhakta* of Iswara. He beholds all beings with reverence, they being the veritable manifestation of Iswara. Cognizing God everywhere in all beings, he grieves not that any loss has occurred to him in any manner. No desire crops up in his mind for anything that he has not obtained. The *Bhakti* eulogized in chapter seven, stanza seventeen is recapitulated here again.

past master of yoga has no such struggle As a ripe fruit that has severed its connection with the tree no more goes back to it, the yogi no more gives any thought to worldly enjoyment His dispassion is superb

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ ५३

अहम्-कारम् बलम् दर्पम् कामम् क्रोधम् परि-ग्रहम् ।
वि मुच्-य निर्-मम शान्त ब्रह्म(न्) भूयाय कल्प-ते ॥

*ahaṁkāram balam darpam*
*kāmam krodham parigraham* ।
*vimucya nirmamaḥ śānto*
*brahmabhūyāya kalpate* ॥

अहंकारम् *ahaṁkāraṁ* egoism बलम् *balam* strength दर्पम् *darpam* arrogance कामम् *kāmam* desire क्रोधम् *krodham* anger परिग्रहम् *parigraham* covetousness विमुच्य *vimucya* having abandoned निर्मम *nirmamaḥ* without "mine" शान्त *śāntaḥ* peaceful ब्रह्मभूयाय *brahma bhūyāya* for becoming Brahman कल्पते *kalpate* is fit

**Having abandoned egoism, violence, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, free from the notion of "mine" and peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman. 53**

Man is different from the clothing he puts on. But there are those who identify themselves with their clothes and feel happy or miserable due to the remarks made on their dress This identification is egoism of a crude kind Identification with the body is the egoism kept up all through the soul's transmigrations Renouncing the body-consciousness and

universe and the beings have all come from Him. After knowing his own relationship with the Lord, he gives himself over entirely to Him. The Lord accepts him as His own self. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

It is possible for the *Jivatman* to merge in the Paramatman. He can then state, "I and my Lord are one." A devoted servant of a master may in the long run be treated by him as a member of his family. Being quite pleased with his earnest service, the master may also install the servant in his place and empower him to execute the domestic concerns in his stead. But the installed man declines that high office with compunction. Still the master insists on his assuming that status. It is in this wise that Iswara claims the ardent devotee as His own. He first reveals His attributes and glories to the Bhakta and then absorbs him in union.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥ ५६

सर्व-कर्माणि अपि सदा कुर्वाणः मद्-वि-अप-आ-श्रयः ।
मद्-प्र-सादात् अव-आप्-नोति शाश्वतम् पदम् अ-वि-अयम् ॥

*sarvakarmāṇy api sadā kurvāṇo madvyapāśrayaḥ* ।
*matprasādād avāpnoti śāśvataṁ padam avyayam* ॥

सर्वकर्माणि *sarva karmāṇi* all actions अपि *api* also सदा *sadā* always कुर्वाणः *kurvāṇaḥ* doing मद्व्यपाश्रयः *mad vyapāśrayaḥ* taking refuge in me मत्प्रसादात् *mat prasādāt* by my grace अवाप्नोति *avāpnoti* obtains शाश्वतम् *śāśvataṁ* the eternal पदम् *padaṁ* abode अव्ययम् *avyayaṁ* indestructible

**Doing continually all actions whatsoever, taking refuge in Me, by My grace he reaches the eternal undecaying Abode.** **56**

of course. The yogi imbued with these excellences is fit for becoming Brahman.

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ ५४

ब्रह्मभूत प्र-सद्-न (त)-आत्मा न शोच-ति न काङ्क्ष-ति ।
सम. सर्वेषु भू-तेषु मद्-भक्तिम् लभ्-अते पराम् ॥

*brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati* ।
*samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktim labhate parām* ॥

ब्रह्मभूतः *brahma bhūtaḥ* Brahman-become प्रसन्न आत्मा *prasanna ātmā* serene-minded न *na* not शोचति *śocati* grieves न *na* not काङ्क्षति *kāṅkṣati* desires समः *samaḥ* the same सर्वेषु *sarveṣu* all भूतेषु *bhūteṣu* to beings मद्भक्तिम् *madbhaktim* devotion unto me लभते *labhate* obtains पराम् *parām* supreme

**Becoming Brahman, serene-minded, he neither grieves nor desires; the same to all beings, he obtains supreme devotion to Me. 54**

There are those who see difference between *Bhakti* and *Jnāna*. Prompted by bias and predisposition, one school of thought holds *Jnāna* as superior and the finale of attainment while another school gives that status and rarity to *Bhakti*. But the Lord makes no such artificial difference between the two. Some preliminary distinctions may seem to exist between these two paths; whereas they become one and the same at their culmination. A baby and its mother evince inordinate love for each other, revealing thereby elements of *Bhakti*. Where is the scope here for *Jnāna*, may be a point pertinently raised.

To be ever engaged in karma is not the goal of life; it is only a means to attain Godhood. Work done without attachment leads the *sadhaka* Godward. Do not mistake the means for the end. The road to a town is not itself that town.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

How are you therefore to conduct yourself in life? The injunction comes :—

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥ ५७

चेतसा सर्व-कर्माणि मयि सम्-नि-अस्-य मद्-परः ।
बुध्-ति-योगम् उप-आ-श्रि-त्-य मद्-चित्तः सततम् भव ॥

*cetasā sarvakarmāṇi mayi saṁnyasya matparaḥ* ।
*buddhiyogam upāśritya maccittaḥ satataṁ bhava* ॥

चेतसा *cetasā* mentally सर्वकर्माणि *sarva karmāṇi* all actions मयि *mayi* in me संन्यस्य *saṁnyasya* resigning मत्परः *matparaḥ* having me as the highest goal बुद्धियोगम् *buddhi yogaṁ* the yoga of discrimination उपाश्रित्य *upāśritya* resorting to मच्चित्तः *maccittaḥ* with the mind fixed on me सततम् *satataṁ* always भव *bhava* be

**Mentally resigning all deeds to Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to Buddhi-yoga, do you ever fix your mind on Me.** 57

An aspect of the powers of a government comes to that man who is an office-bearer in it. When he discharges his duty faithfully, more power and responsibility are entrusted with him. In the midst of his exercising authority, he is to hold himself as a limb of that government and that whatever power he wields is actually the power of the administrative system. When he does this, he is said to be endowed

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥ ५५

भज् त्वा माम् अभि-(ज्ञा)जा-ना-ति यावान् य च अस् मि तद्-त्वत ।
तत माम् तद् त्वत ज्ञा-त्वा विश् अ-ते तद् मनन्तरम् ॥

*bhaktyā mām abhıjānātı yāvān yaś cā 'smı tattvataḥ* ।
*tato mām tattvato jñātvā vıśate tad anantaram* ॥

भक्त्या *bhaktyā* by devotion माम् *mām* me अभिजानाति *abhıjānātı* knows यावान् *yāvān* what य *yaḥ* who च *ca* and अस्मि *asmı* (I) am तत्त्वत *tattvataḥ* in truth तत *tataḥ* then माम् *mām* me तत्त्वत *tattvataḥ* in truth ज्ञात्वा *jñātvā* having known विशते *vıśate* enters तत् *tat* that अनन्तरम् *anantaram* afterwards

**By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then having known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me. 55**

Love makes way to the inaccessible It opens the door to the impossible The unknown and the unknowable become known to the true lover More than diagnosing the disease, if the doctor truly loves the patient and identifies himself with the sufferings to which the man is subjected, his diagnosis would be accurate and treatment very efficacious What is known through love is the true knowledge and what is done through love is the true service.

The *Bhakta* understands the Lord well because he sees with the eye of love The more he understands the Lord, the more he loves Him What the two wings are to a bird, *Bhaktı* and *Jnāna* are to the *sadhaka* He understands that his Lord is both the *Saguna Brahman* and the *Nırguna Brahman.* The

cern of the *Jivatman* is and ought to be to get himself merged in the Paramatman. With this great end in view, the *Jivatman* ought to get his mind ever fixed on the Lord.

If you happen to be blessed with a vision of the Lord, what would you ask of Him? Would you appeal to Him to provide you with facilities to build hospitals, schools, water tanks and alms houses? All these philanthropic activities seem great to us as long as we are removed far away from God. But when we are in communion with Him, all these fade away into insignificance. We ought to pray to the Lord, therefore, not for doing good to the world but for reunion with Him. We ought to beseech Him for devotion, dispassion and discrimination. By loving the Lord we rise from the human to the Divine. Through devotion to the Lord, we get fixed in the conviction that we are the children of His, who is all immortality, all blessedness, all love and all wisdom.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The blessedness born of *Bhakti* is as follows :—

**Egoism is Harmful — 58-60**

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।
अथ चेत्त्वमहङ्कारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि ॥ ५८

मद्-चित्तः सर्व-दुर्गाणि मद्-प्र-सादात् तरिष्यसि ।
अथ चेत् त्वम् अहम्-कारात् न श्रो-स्यसि वि-नश्-स्यसि ॥

*maccittaḥ sarvadurgāṇi matprasādāt tariṣyasi* ।
*atha cet tvaṁ ahaṁkārān na śroṣyasi vinaṅkṣyasi* ॥

मच्चित्तः *maccittaḥ* fixing the mind on me सर्वदुर्गाणि *sarva durgāṇi* all obstacles मत्प्रसादात् *matprasādāt* by my grace तरिष्यसि *tariṣyasi* (thou) shalt overcome अथ *atha* now चेत् *cet* if त्वम् *tvaṁ* thou अहंकारात् *ahaṁ kārāt* from egoism न *na* not श्रोष्यसि *śroṣyasi* (thou) wilt hear विनङ्क्ष्यसि *vinaṅkṣyasi* (thou) shalt perish

As *Jnāna* and *Bhakti* are the same in their supreme state, *Jnāna* and Karma are the same in their climax The *sadhaka* established in *Sattva* does not renounce karma, he only renounces his agency to *karma* Along with his liquidation of agency his *Jivahood* is also abnegated Intense activity creates no weariness in him who renounces agency The feeling that I am the doer brings in exhaustion and frustration in its trail A trifling attempt of his own would then seem enormous in his estimate His attitude of agency is responsible for that magnified feeling On the other hand, he who serves the Lord thinks of Him and none else. The thought of his own self goes into obliteration That state of self-abnegation is verily the state of self-surrender. A river maintains its individuality until it reaches the sea It has an activity too, of its own But on reaching the sea. that river loses its individuality It may further get commingled with an under-current in the sea That activity belongs to the sea and not to the river Such is also the case with a devotee who dedicates himself to Iswara He seems bodily an entity, but mentally he is absorbed in Iswara. Whatever takes place in and through that individual is actually the doing of the Lord The patterns of that action may be variegated A world devastating warfare also has its place in the sport of the Lord. He who submits himself to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord, is no actor, no agent, no reaper of the fruit of the karma taking place through his instrumentality. His ego is surrendered, Brahman, the Pure Consciousness alone persists, instead.

kindly acts of God in order to increase his *Bhakti*. Prahlada's view is the view of every devotee who has effaced the ego.

However much you may try you will not achieve anything if you do not get the grace of the Lord. That grace again, is not easily obtained. All egoism ought to be wiped out as a prelude to it. If the egoistic feeling, "I am the doer," takes possession of your heart, that attitude would alienate you from Iswara. The Lord remains hidden in that heart which is tainted by egoism.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the harm created by egoism? The answer comes :—

यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥ ५९

यत् अहम्-कारम् आ-श्रि-त्-य न योत्स्ये इति मन्-य-से ।
मिथ्या एषः वि-अव-सायः ते प्र-कृतिः त्वाम् नि-योक्ष्यति ॥

*yad ahaṁkāram āśritya na yotsya iti manyase* ।
*mithyai 'ṣa vyavasāyas te prakṛtis tvāṁ niyokṣyati* ॥

यत् *yat* if अहंकारम् *ahaṁkāraṁ* egoism आश्रित्य *āśritya* having taken refuge in न *na* not योत्स्ये *yotsye* (I) will fight इति *iti* thus मन्यसे *manyase* (thou) thinkest मिथ्या *mithyā* vain एषः *eṣaḥ* this व्यवसायः *vyavasāyaḥ* resolve ते *te* thy प्रकृतिः *prakṛtiḥ* nature त्वाम् *tvāṁ* thee नियोक्ष्यति *niyokṣyati* will compel

**If filled with egoism, you think "I will not fight," vain is this, your resolve; your nature will compel you. 59**

Let it be supposed that a murder takes place in the presence of a babe. It is possible that the babe simply laughs at that ghastly happening. This is due

with *Buddhi-yoga* pertaining to the government and his position in it. But if he fancies that that power is his own, it is a mark of lack of understanding. Similar to this, when the *Jivatman* comes to know the truth about himself and his relationship with the Paramatman, he is said to have obtained *Buddhi-yoga.* He is to inquire and find out if there is any category to which the appellation "I" can be pertinently applied. The next inquiry ought to be in regard to the question whether there is anything to which man can lay permanent claim as "mine." Thirdly what exactly man's own karma is, has to be analysed. An accurate study would lead the aspirant to the conclusion that the ego designated as "I," that the ownership fancied as "mine" and that the agency to karma of the *Jivatman*—that all these three factors are merely in one's imagination. There is no reality whatsoever responding to the *Jivahood* of the *Jivatman.*

That aspirant who is endowed with *Buddhi-yoga* would earnestly carry out the injunctions laid down here by the Lord. He would not secede from the performance of the duty fallen to his lot. Mentally he would hold that the karma taking place through him belongs to the Lord; he would therefore have no attachment to that work. All the happenings that are going on all over the universe are actually the work of the Lord. His planned activity and purpose suffer neither setback nor stagnation due to any *Jivatman* failing to discharge his duty. It is *Sanyāsa* to have no personal concern but to do the Lord's work for the sake of the Lord only. The only con-

Moreover :--

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥ ६०

स्व-भाव-जेन कौन्तेय नि-(बन्ध्)बध्-तः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुम् न इच्छसि यत् मोहात् कर्-इ-(स्य)ष्यसि अ-वशः अपि तत् ॥

*svabhāvajena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā |*
*kartuṁ ne 'cchasi yan mohāt kariṣyasy avaśo 'pi tat ||*

स्वभावजेन *svabhāvajena* born of (thy) own nature कौन्तेय *kaunteya* O Kaunteya निबद्धः *nibaddhaḥ* bound स्वेन *svena* (thy) own कर्मणा *karmaṇā* by action कर्तुम् *kartuṁ* to do न *na* not इच्छसि *icchasi* (thou) wishest यत् *yat* that मोहात् *mohāt* from delusion करिष्यसि *kariṣyasi* (thou) shalt do अवशः *avaśaḥ* helpless अपि *api* also तत् *tat* that

**Bound by your own karma born of your nature, that which from delusion you wish not to do, even that you shall do helplessly against your will, O Kaunteya.**

A man is not different from his nature. He and his innate tendencies are identical. A few examples are required to clarify this point. A new cyclist often drives his cycle into a ditch much against his wish. This is due to his frightened nature having sway over him at that moment. A man is an adept in several languages so much so that it is difficult to find out which among them is his mother-tongue. But when an overwhelming joy or sorrow takes possession of him, he blurts out his feelings in his native language which is on a par with his own nature. Dreams of one and all are in tune with their nature. In other words, dreams are the indicators of the

**Fixing your mind on Me, you will by My grace, overcome all obstacles; but if from egoism you will not hear Me, you will perish. 58**

The subjective and the objective or the internal and the external are the two aspects of the phenomenal existence. Impediments to smooth and harmonious living have their sources both in the subjective and the objective aspects. Man pays all attention to redress the obstacles caused by the external world. The unhealthy places are improved and made healthy. Copious supply of water is provided to places utterly dry Hot regions are made comparatively cool by harnessing nature. These are instances of conquering the environment. Modern science pursues these endeavours with remarkable success. But the gaining of happiness does not lie in the subjugation of the external world. Undue extroverted attempt often aggravates pain instead of alleviating it. Introverted attempt is more consequential in this respect. A beneficent world is not beneficent to him who has not conquered his mind. All evils are more subjective than objective. A wicked mind projects wickedness upon the world outside and creates friction and suffering. There is no Satan other than the uncontrolled mind. But that mind which is dedicated to the Lord recognizes His beneficial doings alone everywhere. In the eyes of an ardent devotee, God's helpful hands are constantly at work aiding his onward march. Prahlada's frame of mind may be cited as an example. All the trials and tribulations that came upon him were willingly accepted by Prahlada as the

ईश्वरः *īśvaraḥ* the Lord सर्वभूतानाम् *sarva bhūtānāṁ* of all beings हृद्देशे *hṛddeśe* in the hearts अर्जुन *arjuna* O Arjuna तिष्ठति *tiṣṭhati* dwells भ्रामयन् *bhrāmayan* causing to revolve सर्वभूतानि *sarva bhūtāni* all beings यन्त्र आरूढानि *yantra ārūḍhāni* mounted on a machine मायया *māyayā* by illusion

**The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, and by His Maya causes all beings to revolve as though mounted on a machine. 61**

This truth is made evident by the way in which Sri Krishna and Arjuna made their appearance on the battle-field. Arjuna representing the *Jivatman* was mounted on the chariot, which was analogous to the human body. The chariot moved and the warrior waged the war. The former was unconscious of its movements, while the latter was conscious of the part he played in the war. That hero who first felt that he was the author of his karma was later obliged to learn that all karma actually belonged to Iswara. Sri Krishna drove the chariot, but He took no weapon and waged no war. In other words, while the presence of the Lord causes all work to take place systematically, He remains actionless. He, the Lord who resides as witness in the hearts of all, does no work; but His presence propels the beings do their duties.

The meaning of the word Arjuna is he who is white in colour or pure in nature. He who is pure at heart is competent to know the truth. In the presence of the Paramatman, *Māyā śakti* assumes the power of action. Not only does it do karma con-

to the utter absence of ego in it Not only the ego but the inherent tendencies also are lying latent in that nurseling The question cannot be raised as to why the infant does not oppose the murder taking place before it This is so because agency is not where ego is not No karma good or bad can be attributed to one who is free from ego But the duty is different of the man who cognizes evil in society He ought not to pretend the attitude of a baby The Lord's exhortation to Arjuna is as follows —

'You have been nurtured to this day to the duty of a Kshatriya Your attainments and aptitudes are such that you vehemently oppose evil wherever you find it Is it possible for you to practise quietism when wickedness is let loose in your presence? Your hand unconsciously resists a mosquito bite even in sound sleep, that is how your nature works in spite of yourself That very nature will drag you on to resist evil in the pending war. Any decision on your part contrary to it, amounts to a conflict in your personality There is no greater harm to you than your make up being split up '

'The feeling is surging in you that evil must be eliminated But physically you want to desist from war, marring your valour And this is due to egoism born of *Rajas* Do not yield to it and disgrace yourself '

*Jnana* and *mukti* cannot be had as long as egoism persists Birth and death also do not come to an end to him who is given to egoism

— Sri Ramakrishna

तम् *taṁ* to him एव *eva* even शरणम् गच्छ *śaranaṁ gaccha* take refuge सर्वभावेन *sarva bhāvena* with all thy being भारत *bhārata* O Bharata तत्प्रसादात् *tat prasādāt* by his grace पराम् *parāṁ* supreme शान्तिम् *śāntiṁ* peace स्थानम् *sthānaṁ* the abode प्राप्स्यसि *prāpsyasi* (thou) shalt obtain शाश्वतम् *śāśvataṁ* eternal

**Seek refuge in Him alone with all your heart, O Bharata. By His grace you will gain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.** **62**

The most propitious and consequential act that the *Jivatman* can do for himself is to take refuge in the Lord. To claim the body as his own, to consider himself as the agent of all of his activities, to conceive of himself as a person of consequence in the world — all these attitudes contribute to foster the impermanent *Jivahood* of the *Jivatman*. They run counter to taking refuge in the Lord. The relationship between the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman is the same as that between the wave and the ocean. The wave has no water of its own. The *Jivatman* has no body of his own. The forms of both are impermanent; they are always in a state of flux. The activities of the wave are actually those of the ocean. The wave can never have an existence independent of the ocean. All activities of the individual souls are in reality the sport of the Lord. They have neither individuality nor existence independent of the Lord. Knowing this truth and attuning one's life to this truth is the act of taking refuge in the Lord.

The Pandava brothers, Vidura, Draupati, Kuchela and others had taken refuge in Sri Krishna.

mental make up of people Nobody enjoys any freedom to dream according to plan Everybody is a victim of his dream He is to experience whatever dream falls to his lot In the midst of these vagaries, one thing is certain The dream of an individual is not different from the disposition of that individual It is but normal that a good man enjoys good dreams and a bad man enjoys bad ones As dreams cannot be avoided nature also cannot be ignored Man is obliged to act in conformity with his nature Heaven and hell are the projections of the mental make up of people As shadow follows a substance, man's nature clings on to him To act therefore in tune with one's nature is the only way to work out and to exhaust one's karma

> The vessel in which garlic juice is kept takes in that strong smell However much the vessel may be washed the pungent smell would not disappear Egoism is very much like the smell of garlic It is adamant and would not easily be obliterated
>
> — Sri Ramakrishna

How is the force of karma to be handled? The clue is given —

All karma belongs to Iswara — 61 62

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥ ६१

ईश्वरः सर्व भूतानाम् हृद्-देशे अर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन् सर्व भूतानि यन्त्र-आरूढानि मायया ॥

*iśvarah sarvabhutanām hrddeśe 'rjuna tisthati* ।
*bhrāmayan sarvabhutāni yantrārudhani māyaya* ॥

इति ते ज्ञानम् आ-ख्या-तम् गुह्यात् गुह्य-तरम् मया ।
वि-मृश्-य एतत् अशेषेण यथा इच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥

*iti te jñānam ākhyātaṁ guhyād guhyataraṁ mayā |*
*vimṛśyai 'tad aśeṣeṇa yathe 'cchasi tathā kuru ||*

इति *iti* thus ते *te* to thee ज्ञानम् *jñānaṁ* wisdom आख्यातम् *ākhyātaṁ* has been declared गुह्यात् *guhyāt* than the secret गुह्यतरम् *guhyataraṁ* more secret मया *mayā* by me विमृश्य *vimṛśya* reflecting over एतत् *etat* this अशेषेण *aśeṣeṇa* fully यथा *yathā* as इच्छसि *icchasi* (thou) wishest तथा *tathā* so कुरु *kuru* act

**Thus has wisdom more profound than all profundities been declared to you by Me. Reflect upon it fully and act as you choose. 63**

That truth is said to be profound which is hard to grasp. That other truth is said to be a secret which is kept hidden from others. The laws of Nature are both profound and secret. We know of some of them while the others still remain hidden from us. Many of the secrets of Nature now known to us, had remained unknown for ages. Electricity may be cited as an example. Modern man has learnt to harness this great power. Science deals elaborately with this phenomenon in Nature. Science brings to light many other features and possibilities of Nature. It has made tremendous strides in modern days and is continuing to make further progress. But all these are classified as secular knowledge, pertaining to the mundane.

Sacred knowledge is that which deals with the Divine. This knowledge is known as *Brahma Vidyā*, and it is the oldest and the most perfect one among

stantly, but it also compels beings under its control to work in obedience to its law and regime. Like dolls tethered to a revolving wheel, they are engaged in action. Ignorant as the beings are, they imagine that they are themselves self-initiated workers. They entertain the notion that the choice of doing or not doing a thing is all in their hands. Because of this notion they get increasingly entangled in *Māyā*. He is a *sadhaka* who changes his attitude and holds on to the conviction that he is not the doer, but that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord. All the *Jivatmans* ranging from the high to the low are only tools of Iswara in His cosmic activity. It is with this attitude that the *sadhaka* should work out the karma inherent in him. Instead of claiming agency, he ought to submit to be a willing vehicle.

Poison within the teeth of a snake causes no harm to it. But that poison injected into others causes death to them. Similarly *Maya* that is in Iswara causes Him no harm. Rather, it is an adorable attribute of His. And this *Maya* keeps all beings in bondage.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The statement is now made of the benefit ensuing from the feeling that the Lord gets His work done through all beings —

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥ ६२

तम् एव शरणम् गच्छ सर्व-भावेन भारत ।
तत्-प्र-सादात् पराम् शान्तिम् स्थानम् प्र-आप्-स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥

*tam eva śaraṇam gaccha sarva bhāvena bhārata* ।
*tatprasādāt parām śāntim sthānam prāpsyasi śāśvatam*

votary of principles than of personality; and that is what Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to do.

The culmination of all human endeavours is enunciated in the following three stanzas :—

The Category of Self-surrender — 64-66

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥ ६४

सर्व-गुह्य-तमम् भूयः शृणु मे परमम् वचः ।
इष्टः अ(सु)-सि मे दृढम् इति ततः वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥

*sarvaguhyatamaṁ bhūyaḥ śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ* ।
*iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti tato vakṣyāmi te hitam* ॥

सर्वगुह्यतमम् *sarva guhya tamaṁ* the most secret of all भूयः *bhūyaḥ* again शृणु *śṛṇu* hear मे *me* my परमम् *paramaṁ* supreme वचः *vacaḥ* word इष्टः *iṣṭaḥ* beloved असि *asi* (thou) art मे *me* of me दृढम् *dṛḍhaṁ* dearly इति *iti* thus ततः *tataḥ* therefore वक्ष्यामि *vakṣyāmi* (I) will speak ते *te* thy हितम् *hitaṁ* what is good

**Listen again to My supreme word, the profoundest of all. You are beloved of Me and steadfast of heart; therefore I shall tell what is for your good. 64**

It is not possible for all to dive deep into the sea; a few experts alone can do it. Among the principles governing human life, the ordinary ones can be grasped by almost all; but the profound ones elude the understanding of the common man. A good deal of mental preparation is required for their comprehension. Being dazed with the knotty problems of life, Arjuna appealed to the Lord at the outset for *Sreyas* to be taught to him. The compas-

The brothers of Sri Rama had taken refuge in Him. So also Guha, Sugreeva, Vibheeshana and others had taken refuge in Sri Rama. All those who had taken refuge derived immediate peace of mind. Kaikeyi, Vali, Ravana, Kamsa and others of their type revolted against the Lord instead of taking refuge in Him. And there was no end to the excited troubles they had brought on themselves.

The setting of Nature is ever congenial to the spiritual growth of the *Jivatman* This favourable situation is termed as the grace of the Lord. Poetically stated, the wind of the grace of God is constantly blowing. Those among the aspirants who dedicate themselves to the Lord are like the prudent sailors who avail of that wind to navigate the ship to her destination. The seamen who take advantage of the wind need not have to toil much in oaring the ship. Similarly, the devotees who take refuge in God do not suffer from their worldly life. Though heavily engaged in karma, they are not bound by karma. Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode in God are verily theirs.

Srimathi Radha was commissioned to fetch water for Sri Krishna with a pitcher full of holes Not a drop of water leaked out when she discharged that duty for the sake of the Lord. When the assembled Gopis and others extolled her greatness, she exclaimed that whatever had taken place was the glory of Sri Krishna and that she was merely an instrument in His hands

— *Sri Ramakrishna*

Freedom of Enquiry into Truth — 63

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ ६३

is capable of doing with the human material is pronounced in the following stanza.

How does the devotee behold the Lord? He beholds Him as his own, even as the Gopis of Brindavan beheld Sri Krishna. Those milkmaids cared not for the cosmic powers of that Great Being. Krishna was their darling and they were satisfied with that. To the *Bhakta*, the Lord is his innermost Self and he is absorbed in that feeling.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the *Sreyas* expounded by the Lord? The elucidation comes :—

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥ ६५

मद्-मनाः भव मद्-भज्-तः मद्-याजी माम् नमस्-कुरु ।
माम् एव (इ-स्य) एष्य-सि सत्यम् ते प्रति-जा(ज्ञा)ने प्रियः असि मे ॥

*manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṁ namaskuru* ।
*māṁ evai 'ṣyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyo 'si me* ॥

मन्मनाः *manmanāḥ* with mind fixed on me भव *bhava* be मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ* devoted to me मद्याजी *madyājī* sacrifice to me माम् *māṁ* me नमस्कुरु *namaskuru* bow down माम् *māṁ* to me एव *eva* even एष्यसि *eṣyasi* (thou) shalt come सत्यम् *satyaṁ* truth ते *te* to thee प्रतिजाने *pratijāne* (I) promise प्रियः *priyaḥ* dear असि *asi* (thou) art मे *me* of me

**Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice to Me; prostrate before Me; so shall you come to Me. This is My pledge to you, for you are dear to Me.** 65

Truth and God are identical. Whatever comes from Him must be Truth, even as what emanates

the sciences. Its sole purpose is to lead man from the impermanent to the Permanent, from ignorance to Enlightenment, from sorrow to Beatitude and finally from death to Immortality. In its practical aspect, it comes down as injunctions — what to do and what to refrain from. In this Supreme Science, there is no place for sophistry and dogmatic fiat. The governing principles are presented systematically and logically. Superstition and baseless belief have no place in Vedanta. All tenets, commandments and systems of yoga are presented coherently and convincingly. Man is given the freedom to investigate into the validity of this science. It is no sin, no libel to doubt the very existence of God. Nihilism, atheism and agnosticism have their due places in man's honest search into the Reality. When consistently pursued, even these seemingly derogatory paths wean man from darkness to Light. Freedom is the first condition of growth — physical, mental, intellectual, ethical and spiritual. The Lord encourages Arjuna and through him all aspirants to exercise their power of understanding, enquire into yoga as daringly and inquisitively as they can and accept and practise those principles only which they are convinced are beneficial to them. Laws pertaining to the ethical and spiritual life of man are inviolable; they are facets of Truth. They require no defenders, no patrons and protectors. Sri Krishna Himself gets His status as Yogeswara because of His being the *embodiment of the principles of Yoga*. A personality becomes great to the extent he adheres to principles. A seeker after Truth must be more a

man is not prepared to avail himself of it. His base mind drags him away from the Divine. This earth-bound mind is very useful to him to procure those things only that are detrimental to spiritual growth. Its vagrant behaviour continues through several births before discrimination dawns on it. When right understanding develops, the mind submits itself to be directed Godward. It is then weaned from the world and dedicated to the Lord. The mind that had erstwhile been the den of base tendencies is converted into the sanctuary of the Divine. And this is a sublime and soul-redeeming turning point in man's life.

As the devotion to the Lord increases, the devotee imbues the divine qualities of the Lord. In her excessive love of Sri Krishna, each Gopi thought she was herself Sri Krishna. And this is the goal to which pure devotion leads the devotee. While in the process of getting fixed in it a divine madness overtakes the devotee; the Lord in his turn becomes mad for His devotee.

When the love for a person overshadows the love of wealth, all the wealth is willingly sacrificed for that person, even as parents do for their children. To a devotee nothing in the world is dearer than his Lord. His offering therefore as sacrifice all his possessions and ultimately himself too, is but a matter of course.

Prostration is a mark of subordinating one's individuality to the greatness of another. The devotee delights in prostrating himself before his Lord,

sionate Lord guides His constant companion just now converted into a devout disciple, into the core of the *Sreyas*. *Paramam vachaḥ*—the supreme word—is the apt term used in this respect. *Mahā vākya*—the great assertion—is another rare term equivalent to it. The *Mahā vākyās* in the Upanishads are the great utterances of the Rishis. This *Paramam vachaḥ* is on a par with the *Mahā vākyās* in the Upanishads. The Lord Himself makes this conclusive statement.

Just as the subtle workings of Nature are beyond the ken of the ordinary people, the subtle spiritual truths concealed in the human heart are also incomprehensible, except to a few advanced souls. The Lord residing in the hearts of all is their fastest Friend. His grace is ever at work to redeem beings. All the happenings in the world outside are also directed towards that one end. The grace of the Lord is the greatest spiritual alchemy. It converts a base man into a sterling man, into a divinity and ultimately absorbs him into Godhood. Nature is the great divine factory where this spiritual reclamation is eternally carried out. What the divine touch is capable of, is presented in two different ways by Sri Krishna. He takes a trifling reed and makes a flute with it, which, if trampled on, becomes useless rubbish. But in the hands of the Lord, it fulfils a cosmic function. The melody that He produces with it enchants all beings and draws them in union with Him. An inert reed becoming an instrument in the hands of the Lord can animate the universe. This is the first aspect of the divine touch. Secondly, what the Lord

karma. That karma is called dharma which proves helpful to the *Jivatman* in his Godward progress. On the attainment of Godhood that helpful dharma itself has to be renounced, its purpose being fully served. Surrendering himself to the Lord is the culmination of all the endeavours of the *Jivatman*. The import of self-surrender requires to be truly understood. It is not the confession of one's inability to discharge one's duty oneself. It is not a supplication for an additional help from the Lord, after the mode of a troop being replenished. But self-surrender is like a stream joining a rivulet, a rivulet having its confluence with a river, and a river making itself over to the ocean. Self-surrender is verily self-fulfilment. The will of the *Jivatman* merges in the Will of the Lord. The will and the doings of the *Jivatman* are in reality infinitesimal sparks of the Will of the Lord. Karma yoga raises the *sadhaka* to the realization of this benign position; it results in self-surrender.

A *Bhakta* on the other hand is ever depending on his Lord. The good and the evil that befall him are all viewed by him as the Will of the Lord. Therefore he makes no distinction between the good and the evil. He does not contrast dharma with *adharma*. From the beginning to the end, the *Bhakta* feels himself as non-separate from the Lord. Rather he loses his individuality in the absorbing love of the Maker. If a man walks in the middle of a busy street through absent-mindedness, he runs the risk of meeting with some accident. But the *Bhakta's* case is different. In his God-intoxicated state, he is not

from the sun must be sunny. The gifts of the sun are light and heat, both being indispensable to life on earth. This is the bare truth about the sun. Similarly the Lord declares the bare Truth about Himself and His relationship with the *Jivatman*. The sole object of His being embodied is to tell this Truth to the world. The lives of the great ones bear testimony to the fact that whoever follows this teaching emerges as an extraordinary being. The Truth in the Lord's statement is amplified by them as well.

The Lord's statement, 'You are dear to Me' is pregnant with meaning. In fact, all beings are dear to Iswara. When the required purification is effected the all-absorbing love is made evident. The *Dvaita*, the *Visishtādvaita* and the *Advaita* systems are the three typical modes of establishing relationship between the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman. Love expresses itself in and through all of these patterns. It asserts the Truth that the *Jivatman* and the Paramatmân are ever linked. It is the greatest unifying force. Progress culminates in perfect union. Love leads the *Jivatman* to the pinnacle of eternal union with the Paramatman.

We make use of a vehicle when we want to go from one place to another. The vehicle is the means and reaching the place is the end. But in our pilgrimage towards the Paramatman, the means and the end are the same. It is by the grace of the Lord that we get at the Lord. By His grace only we make endeavours to get at Him. The grace of the Lord is the one boon that is ever available to man; but

A babe seated on the lap of its mother wields the unconscious power to attract all men and women to its taintless sweetness. This is due to the babe's mind still remaining in its original divine state. It has not yet assumed the artificial modifications and biases known as the nationality, the colour, the language and the social habits and usages. Its inborn tendencies are also still lying dormant. While in this state, the babe is, for the time being, equivalent to the *Jnāni*. It is therefore attracting all beings to its august presence. It is hard to find one, quite immune to the benign influence of the baby.

The *Jnāni* is on a par with the baby in the excellence of his mind. It is held that the renunciation of mind is the greatest of all renunciations. Various tendencies and dispositions are clinging on to the mind of the unenlightened. And these tendencies are termed as *svadharma*. To work out one's *svadharma* is the only means to outgrow one's *svadharma*. The best cure that can be effected for a disease is to allow it to run its course; and that is the natural course. But if it be suppressed instead, it reappears in some other worse form. The *svadharma* of an individual is in this manner clinging to him. To work without attachment and liquidate the karma is the goal of life. When the rain-bearing clouds exhaust themselves with a downpour, the clear sky remains as ever by itself. When all karma is worked out with detachment, Atman as Pure Consciousness remains by Itself.

A thing is said to be pure while it is in its original state. That very thing is said to have

because in doing so he posits the truth about God. The more the prostration before the Adorable Being, the greater is the bliss enjoyed by the devotee.

In chapter nine, stanza thirtyone, the Lord induced Arjuna to proclaim that the devotee never meets with destruction for any reason whatsoever. But at the conclusion, the Lord Himself undertakes to fulfil that solemn mission. He pledges that His devotee is well protected.

A man immersed in water struggles hard for air to breathe. A seeker of God ought to evince a similar restlessness for His realization.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the eternal and life-redeeming message that comes forth from the Lord? It is as follows :—

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ ६६

सर्व-धर्मान् परि-त्यज्-य माम् एकम् शरणम् व्रज ।
अहम् त्वा सर्व-पापेभ्यः मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

*sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja ।*
*ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ ॥*

सर्वधर्मान् *sarva dharmān* all duties परित्यज्य *parityajya* having abandoned माम् *māṁ* to me एकम् *ekam* alone शरणम् *śaraṇaṁ* refuge व्रज *vraja* take अहम् *ahaṁ* I त्वा *tvā* thee सर्वपापेभ्यः *sarva pāpebhyaḥ* from all sins मोक्षयिष्यामि *mokṣayiṣyāmi* will liberate मा *mā* not शुचः *śucaḥ* grieve

**Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sins; grieve not. 66**

An embodied being is also an embodiment of

to cross over from karma to the Beatitude which is beyond karma. His teachings become lucid to all the aspirants who take refuge in Him and seek enlightenment from Him. Self-surrender ultimately leads to the union of the *Jivatman* and the Paramatman.

What is the state of complete self-surrender? It is like lounging and taking rest after the day's hard toil. It is free from care and grief. Undefinable Bliss emanates from it.

— **Sri Ramakrishna**

The yoga aspect of the spiritual message of the Bhagavad Gita is over here. A question may arise as to who are the persons that are fit to study and practise this teaching, universal though it is. The answer comes :—

**Competency for Following the Gita — 67-71**

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।
न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥ ६७

इदम् ते न अ-तपस्-काय न अ-भक्-ताय कदाचन ।
न च अ-शुश्रूषवे वाच्यम् न च माम् यः अभि-असूयति ॥

*idaṁ te nā 'tapaskāya nā 'bhaktāya kadācana* ।
*na cā 'śuśrūṣave vācyaṁ na ca māṁ yo 'bhyasūyati* ॥

इदम् *idaṁ* this ते *te* by thee न *na* not अतपस्काय *atapaskāya* to one who is devoid of austerity न *na* not अभक्ताय *abhaktāya* to one who is not devoted कदाचन *kadācana* ever न *na* not च *ca* and अशुश्रूषवे *aśuśrūṣave* to one who does not render service or who desires not to listen वाच्यम् *vācyaṁ* to be spoken न *na* not च *ca* and माम् *māṁ* me यः *yaḥ* who अभ्यसूयति *abhyasūyati* cavils at

aware of the earthly happenings. And Providence mysteriously protects him even in places exposed to dangers and mishaps. Like a baby in the bosom of its mother, the devotee is under the kind care of the Maker. All the same, the good work that is to be done through that devotee is turned out unawares. Intense thought of God is the self-surrender of the *Bhakta*.

The dawn of knowledge in the *Jnāni* is also a form of self-surrender or an act of taking refuge in the Lord. The reflections of the good and the bad things may be seen in a mirror. For this reason, the mirror undergoes no modification. The actions known as dharma and *adharma* belong to the Prakriti. They do not in the least affect the Pure Consciousness, which is the background of the individual. He who identifies himself with the Pure Consciousness renounces all *Upādhis* or the limiting adjuncts. What persists in him is the great Awareness, which knows no distinctions such as the internal and the external. The attainment of this Supreme State is the act of taking refuge in the Lord.

The state of self-surrender or the act of taking refuge in the Lord achieved by the yogi, the *Bhakta* and the *Jnāni* is one and the same. Lord, the one Reality is defined in three different ways, governed by the characteristics of the paths. The yogi merges himself in the *Sat* aspect of the Reality; the *Jnāni* waxes as the *Chit* and the *Bhakta* blooms in the *ānanda* aspect of It.

the seed of sorrow in its train. That man who slights Godhood in the creation nullifies whatever good he may do to people. He who is devoid of austerity, devotion, service and faith in the inherent Divinity of man derives no benefit from the pursuit of the Bhagavad Gita.

The word *aśuśrūshavaḥ* has two meanings. He who does not render service, is one meaning, and he who does not care to listen and follow is another meaning. Out of conceit, bigotry or fanaticism if one refuses to pay heed to this message, it need not be imposed on such a one.

Rain water does not accumulate on an elevated place. It flows away to a low region. Even so, the grace of the Lord does not descend in the hearts of the haughty and the vainglorious. It dawns in the hearts of the low and the meek.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benefit derived by the one who propagates the teachings of the Gita as an act of service to the Lord? The answer comes :—

य इदं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥ ६८

यः इदम् परमम् गुह्यम् मद्-भक्तेषु अभि-धा-स्य-ति ।
भज्-तिम् मयि पराम् कृ-त्वा माम् एव (इ-स्य) एष्य-ति न-संशयः ॥

*ya idaṁ paramaṁ guhyaṁ madbhakteṣv abhidhāsyati* ।
*bhaktiṁ mayi parāṁ kṛtvā māṁ evai 'ṣyaty asaṁśayaḥ*

यः *yaḥ* who इदम् *idaṁ* this परमम् *paramaṁ* supreme गुह्यम् *guhyaṁ* secret मद्भक्तेषु *madbhakteṣu* to my devotees अभिधास्यति *abhidhāsyati* shall declare भक्तिम् *bhaktiṁ* devotion मयि *mayi* in me पराम् *parāṁ* supreme कृत्वा

become impure when it comes into contact with and affected by another thing. The impure state of the *Jivatman* is termed as his having incurred sin. To put it in another way, the *Jivatman* is a sinner; for, he has assumed on himself what is not his own. Karma which seems inherent in him is actually alien to him. When the *Jivatman* identifies himself with the Paramatman, he is purged of all sin. It is *moksha* or liberation when the *Jivatman* is rid of the *Jivahood.* He is freed from individualized consciousness and fixed in Cosmic Consciousness, which is without beginning and without end. He is Immortal. He is Bliss and Beatitude. Grief has no place in that State of Blessedness. When a baby is born into the world, it cries. Only a still-born one does not cry. In one form or another crying and grieving continue all through the mundane life. It is in the attainment of *Brahma jnāna* that grief comes to an end once for all. The Lord assures that Divine Felicity to Arjuna who started his enquiry into yoga with despondency. *Brahma jnāna* is all Enlightenment. So there is no place in it for the darkness of ignorance. Brahman is *Sat-chit-ānandam.* On renouncing the mind, what remains of the *Jivatman* is Brahman.

Arjuna is the immediate recipient of the message of the Lord, which is eternal and universal. It applies to all the souls wending their way Godward. "Cast off weakness; wake up with manliness; discharge your dharma"—with such a commandment the Lord commenced His message. "Renounce all dharma and be in eternal union with Me" is again His conclusion. The intervening teachings are all the means

spiritual matters among the good and the virtuous increases the steadfastness in the *sādhana*. *Bhakti* and *Jnāna* are on the increase in such an ardent soul. Spiritual service is therefore another means to gain access to Divinity.

Bhagavan, Bhagavata (the scriptures) and Bhaktas are all identical.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the Lord hold the devotee who carries this spiritual message among righteous and the spiritually inclined people? The answer comes:—

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥ ६९

न च तस्मात् मनुष्येषु कः-चित् मे प्रिय-कृत्-तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मात् अन्यः प्रिय-तरः भुवि ॥

*na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me priya kṛttamaḥ* ।
*bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyaḥ priyataro bhuvi* ॥

न *na* not च *ca* and तस्मात् *tasmāt* than he मनुष्येषु *manuṣyeṣu* among men कश्चित् *kaścit* any मे *me* of me प्रियकृत्तमः *priya kṛttamaḥ* one who does dearer service भविता *bhavitā* shall be न *na* not च *ca* and मे *me* of me तस्मात् *tasmāt* than he अन्यः *anyaḥ* another प्रियतरः *priyataraḥ* dearer भुवि *bhuvi* in the earth

**Nor is there any among men who renders dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than he. 69**

All the happenings, great and small, magnificent and minute, taking place in the universe are verily the doings of Iswara. The universe itself is the revelation of the glory of Iswara. Among all these

**This is never to be spoken by you to one who is devoid of austerities, nor to one who is not devoted, nor to one who does not do service, nor to one who speaks ill of Me. 67**

The Bhagavad Gita is a symposium of all the principles governing the ethical and spiritual life of man. The Lord's supreme motive is to make these teachings available to all the aspirants. The life of man would rise in stature to the extent these principles are imbibed and put into practice. Still, there are flippant people among whom this sacred science should not be made a cheap affair, serving no useful purpose whatsoever. As an album of beautiful pictures and drawings is of no avail to the blind, the teachings of the Gita do no good to those who are *devoid of austerity and disciplined life*. Again, a thoroughly disciplined life is not an end in itself any more than merely owning a perfectly made musical instrument is. As music ought to be brought out of the instrument, a perfect life of man ought to be directed to the cultivation of devotion to the Lord. It is *Bhakti* that sanctifies the human life and renders *austerity purposeful*. The nature of *Bhakti* is ever to give unconditionally and never to grab. The devotee expresses his love in the form of service. He delights in serving and not in being served. The best utility to which the human body can be put is a whole-hearted service to others. Finally all these merits must be dominated by the feeling that it is Divinity that is manifesting Itself in all these forms. Any attitude short of it is likely to beget evil and sow

*adhyeṣyate ca ya imaṁ dharmyaṁ saṁvādam āvayoḥ* ।
*jñānayajñena tenā 'ham iṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ* ॥

अध्येष्यते *adhyeṣyate* shall study च *ca* and यः *yaḥ* who इमम् *imaṁ* this धर्म्यम् *dharmyaṁ* sacred संवादम् *saṁvādaṁ* dialogue आवयोः *āvayoḥ* of ours ज्ञानयज्ञेन *jñāna yajñena* by the sacrifice of wisdom तेन *tena* by him अहम् *ahaṁ* I इष्टः *iṣṭaḥ* worshipped स्याम् *syāṁ* (I) shall have been इति *iti* thus मे *me* my मतिः *matiḥ* conviction

**And he who will study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I shall have been worshipped by Jnàna Yajna; such is My conviction. 70**

Devotedly hearing the exposition of the Bhagavad Gita is one way of learning it; a personal pious study of it is another way of making it one's own. Earnest perusal and pondering provide the means to make spiritual matters one's own. A clear understanding of the spiritual matters is an effective means for the adoration of the Lord. The very purpose of human life is to adore the Almighty through right understanding and right relationship with Him. He who adheres in life to the teachings of the Gita makes an unconscious but very effective propaganda of it. For, the best way to preach Vedanta is to live Vedanta. Practice is always superior to precept; a refined living is superior to a refined exposition of the law of life. Preachers may be had in plenty; but those who practise the precept are but few. Those who study the Gita and try to live up to its teachings are performing *jnāna yajna*, which is very much pleasing to the Lord. It is again a superior form of the worship of the Maker.

*kṛtvā* having done मामू *mām* to me एव *eva* even एष्यति *eṣyati* shall come असंशय: *asamśayah* doubtless

**He who with supreme devotion to Me will teach this immensely profound philosophy to My devotees, shall doubtless come to Me alone. 68**

The good and the beneficial in one increase as and when they are shared with others. Food for example is indispensable and most beneficial to all beings; and it is sought and procured for personal benefit only. But on experiment and observation it may be found that he who procures food for common use prospers better than he who grabs it exclusively for himself. He who eats in company or he who shares his food with others keeps better health and strength than he who eats all by himself. Fostering other lives is the sure means to enrich one's own life. And this principle is as efficacious at the ethical and spiritual levels as it is at the physical level. By imparting knowledge and wisdom to others one gets ingrained in intellectual clarity. He who teaches others learns better than he who studies for himself. The more one teaches the more that one learns

By devotedly carrying the spiritual treasures contained in the Bhagavad Gita for the benefit of other ardent souls, the preceptor gets a better grasp. The one who expounds the Gita ought not to assume the role of a master. One ought to feel oneself an instrument of the Lord, in spreading His spiritual message. The role of the master engenders egoism while that of a servant of the Lord promotes devotion to Him. The delight in the propagation of the

through earnest expounding and through ardent hearing. The impress produced on the mind is the same in either case. An earnest practice is all important irrespective of the way in which the principles of the Gita are assimilated.

It is but natural for the teacher to enquire of the taught if he has grasped the teaching properly. In tune with this usage, the Lord now asks Arjuna as to how he has received this immortal message :—

**The Dawn of Knowledge — 72-73**

**कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।**
**कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥ ७२**

कच्चित् एतत् श्रु-तम् पार्थ त्वया एकाग्रेण चेतसा ।
कच्चित् अ-ज्ञान-सम्-मोहः (प्र-नश्-तः) प्रनष्टः ते धन-म्-जय ॥

*kaccid etac chrutaṁ pārtha tvayai 'kāgreṇa cetasā |*
*kaccid ajñānasaṁmohaḥ pranaṣṭas te dhanaṁjaya ||*

कच्चित् *kaccit* whether एतत् *etat* this श्रुतम् *śrutaṁ* heard पार्थ *pārtha* O Partha त्वया *tvayā* by thee एकाग्रेण *ekāgreṇa* by one-pointed चेतसा *cetasā* by mind कच्चित् *kaccit* whether अज्ञानसंमोहः *ajñāna saṁmohaḥ* the delusion of ignorance प्रनष्टः *pranaṣṭaḥ* has been destroyed ते *te* thy धनंजय *dhanaṁjaya* O Dhananjaya

**Has this been heard by you, O Partha, with an attentive mind? Has the delusion of your ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya? 72**

The concentration of the mind is the criterion for a comprehensive reception of any message delivered. A distracted or an inattentive mind may or may not grasp all the implications of a sublime

manifestations and revelations, the Bhagavad Gita occupies a unique position. It explains the working of the universe and the divinity inherent in it. It expounds the laws governing human life The Substratum which is the Source of the universe and the beings in it, is lucidly presented by it. Knowledge pertaining to the Divine and the mundane is all contained in it. To put it in another way, the ways and the means of attaining Godhood and also of making earthly life prosperous and fruitful, are all convincingly conveyed through it The follower of the Gita would very soon become a yogi. For all these reasons the carrying of the message of this *great book to the prospective sadhakas is* a benign work. No other service is equal to this spiritual mission The doer of this soul-emancipating service is indeed dear to the Lord, he being instrumental in this solemn act.

The drain pipes on the roof of the house are fixed with open mouths of tigers and lions The rain water coming from the sky therefore seems to jet out from the mouths of these beasts Similar to this, the utterances of the holy men appear to be their own, while actually they all descend from the Most High

— Sri Ramakrishna

It is not given to all to do the noble service of expounding the Gita. Still they have a duty by this benign book. That duty is explained as follows:—

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ ७०

अधि(इ)ए-(स्य)ध्य-ते च य इमम् धर्म्यम् सम्-वादम्-आवयो ।
ज्ञान-यज्ञेन तेन अहम् इष्ट. (यज्-त.) (अस्)स्-याम् इति मे मतिः ॥

(नश्-तः) नष्टः मोहः स्मृ-तिः (लभ्-ता) लब्धा त्वत्-प्रसाद त् मया अ-च्युत ।
स्थितः (स्था-तः) अस्मि ग(म्)त-सम्-देहः कृ-इ(स्ये)ष्ये वचनम् तव ॥

*arjuna uvāca*

*naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvatprasādān mayā 'cyuta |*
*sthito 'smi gatasaṁdehaḥ kariṣye vacanaṁ tava ||*

अर्जुन उवाच *arjuna uvāca* Arjuna said:

नष्टः *naṣṭaḥ* is destroyed मोहः *mohaḥ* delusion स्मृतिः *smṛtiḥ* memory लब्धा *labdhā* has been gained त्वत्प्रसादात् *tvat prasādāt* through thy grace मया *mayā* by me अच्युत *acyuta* O Achyuta स्थितः *sthitaḥ* firm अस्मि *asmi* (I) am गतसंदेहः *gata saṁdehaḥ* freed from doubts करिष्ये *kariṣye* (I) will do वचनम् *vacanaṁ* word तव *tava* thy

**Arjuna said :**

**My delusion is destroyed. I have regained my memory through Your grace, O Achyuta. I am firm; I am free from doubt. I shall act according to Your word.** **73**

At the start Arjuna declined to fight and sat dejected on the seat of the chariot. But the man was thoroughly transformed after hearing the life-invigorating message of the Lord. He made himself over entirely to the Maker, which is the last and the best act of the *Jivatman*. The fuel consigned to fire becomes fire as it should. In that manner Arjuna became an instrument of the Lord. He surrendered his individuality and regained identity with the Cosmic Personality.

The message of the Bhagavad Gitā was delivered for the immediate benefit of Arjuna. But it has become the ambrosia infusing life to all the way-

There is another man who is unable to study the Gita. What is the course he should adopt for his emancipation? The path is shown as follows:—

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाँल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥ ७१

श्रद्धा-वान् अन्-असूयः च (श्रु)शृ-नु-यात् अपि यः नरः ।
सः अपि मुच्-तः शुभान् लोकान् प्र-आप्-नु-यात् पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥

*śraddhāvān anasūyaś ca śṛṇuyād api yo naraḥ* ।
*so 'pi muktaḥ śubhāṁl lokān prāpnuyāt puṇya-*
*karmaṇām* ॥

श्रद्धावान् *śraddhāvān* full of faith अनसूयः *anasūyaḥ* free from malice च *ca* and शृणुयात् *śṛṇuyāt* may hear अपि *api* also यः *yaḥ* who नरः *naraḥ* man सः *saḥ* he अपि *api* also मुक्तः *muktaḥ* liberated शुभान् *śubhān* happy लोकान् *lokān* worlds प्राप्नुयात् *prāpnuyāt* shall attain पुण्यकर्मणाम् *puṇya karmaṇām* of those of righteous deeds

**And the man who hears this, full of faith and free from scoff — even he, liberated from evil, shall attain the auspicious regions of the righteous. 71**

The man who is heedless of food is consequently heedless of his bodily fitness. There is a man who is well informed of the nutritive value of the food he consumes and of the digestion and assimilation of it in his system. There is another man who eats with gusto but does not know how that food gets absorbed in him. The one that knows and the ignorant man derive the same benefit from the food consumed. The clear exponent of the Gita and the one who earnestly practises it from mere hearsay obtain the same benefit. The clarity of understanding is possible both

of it. He would have preferred non-existence to existence. He who was in such a plight is now completely free from delusion. The self-created problems have all melted away as an empty dream. Life and death, duty and its termination, bondage and freedom—questions pertaining to these dualities are all resolved along with the destruction of delusion.

*Smrtiḥ mayā labdhaḥ* means 'I have regained my memory.' A man in epilepsy forgets himself completely. He does not know how he acts and what he utters. He is obliged to learn from others about his behaviour in that abnormal state. People attached to earthly life suffer from a delirium of their own. Their view of life is based on things impermanent and on false premise. Arjuna has now awakened to reality. Memory of himself and of his relationship with the Maker has come back to him. In a purified mind *ātmabodha* or uncontaminated Awareness dawns of its own accord. That experience is here delineated as regaining one's own memory. That the *Jivatman* is not a mere creature of circumstances, that he has his part to play in the functioning of the Cosmos and that he is part and parcel of the Paramatman are all realized in the regaining of one's memory.

*Tvat prasādāt* means 'through Your grace.' The Lord's grace is indispensable to the reawakening of the *Jivatman* to his original state. A man in swoon is brought back to his normal wakefulness by his face being washed with cold water and by fanning cool air to him. This service rendered to him is not

statement. A brief and pointed pronouncement is sufficient to drive home the point to a keen and attentive listener. Here, the deliverer of the message is concerned with the welfare of the taught. Hence this enquiry about the state of mind of the person.

Enlightenment is possible to that mind only which is fixed in concentration. The sunbeams gain in intensity as they get converged. A concentrated light is at once highly self-expressive and capable of revealing things in their native perspective. A concentrated mind understands the Atman and the Prakriti just as they are. Knowledge and ignorance do not co-exist. The former reveals things as they are while the latter distorts them in divergent ways. A figure in dim light is viewed variously by people of various dispositions. A thief passing by it doubts whether it is not a policeman, who in his turn takes it for a thief. A timid man gets frightened thinking it to be a ghost. But a fourth man who has already seen it in broad daylight understands the figure to be a stump of wood. With the dawn of true knowledge all apparitions of ignorance vanish of their own accord. The Lord enquires of Arjuna if he has been blessed with a true understanding of the import of life.

When an ardent disciple is taught by a worthy master, true enlightenment is bound to ensue from it. Arjuna's answer bears evidence to this fact.

अर्जुन उवाच

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ ७३

*Gata sandehaḥ* — 'I am free from doubt.' This is the fourth boon come to Arjuna. No doubt rises in the mind of the one who intuits the Atman. Just as no one doubts one's existence on earth, the *Brahma jnāni* does not doubt the Self which he is. His Awareness is self-evident.

*Tava vacanam karishye* — 'I shall act according to your word.' This is Arjuna's concluding statement. What he declined to do at the start, that he chooses to do subsequently. And this is the result of right understanding. The teachings of the scriptures, the injunction that comes from the enlightened master and the spiritual realization of the *sadhaka* – all these three never come into conflict with one another; they simply corroborate one another.

The tadpole can live both in water and on land after it sheds its tail. The tail of ignorance drops off from man when he gets enlightened in *Brahma jnana*. He then becomes a *Jivanmukta*-liberated soul. He simultaneously lives in the world and rests in Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The dialogue ends here. Its link with the rest of the events is presented in the following few stanzas.

**Sanjaya's Conclusive Statement — 74-78**

संजय उवाच

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥ ७४

इति अहम् वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महा-आत्मनः ।
सम्-वादम् इमम् अ-श्रौषम् अद्भुतम् रोम-हर्षणम् ॥

worn aspirants. The passage of time does not mar its freshness. It provides the guidance for an abundant life. It cures man of the evil of birth and death. What is prepared for the benefit of one individual often happens to be of no use to him but of immense use to some other person. The rain-bearing clouds for example gather in one place and pour down in another place. Any accident of this kind has not taken place to the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. The worthy man for whom it was imparted made the best use of it and derived the maximum benefit from it. Indications of that blessedness are in evidence in the very utterance of Arjuna. Every part of it is pregnant with profound ideas. They may be profitably looked into :—

Achyuta is the term applied here by Arjuna to his Master. He who does not deviate from His Supreme State, is the literal meaning of this word; and Sri Krishna is verily the embodiment of that Supreme State. Whoever gives himself over to that Divinity gains It in return. Arjuna has undoubtedly surrendered himself to that Great Being, thereby making himself the inheritor of Divinity.

*Mohaḥ nashṭaḥ* is his next statement. "My delusion is destroyed" is the meaning of this utterance. A man in delusion sees stars in the sky in the day-time. A dwarf appears as a giant to him. Arjuna was besieged with a delusion of this kind on his initial survey of the battle-field. Earthly life was beset with problems to him. Life seemed an unbearable burden; he could neither carry it nor rid himself

the far off battle-field. The answer to this question emanates from Sanjaya himself :—

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यमहं परम् ।
योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥ ७५

व्यास-प्रसादात् श्रु-तवान् एतत् गुह्यम् अहम् परम् ।
योगम् योग-ईश्वरात् कृष्णात् साक्षात्-कथ्-अयतः स्वयम् ॥

*vyāsaprasādāc chrutavān etad guhyam ahaṁ paraṁ |*
*yogaṁ yogeśvarāt kṛṣṇāt sākṣāt kathayataḥ svayam ||*

व्यासप्रसादात् *vyāsa prasādāt* through the grace of Vyasa श्रुतवान् *śrutavān* I have heard एतत् *etat* this गुह्यम् *guhyaṁ* secret अहम् *ahaṁ* I परम् *paraṁ* supreme योगम् *yogaṁ* yoga योगेश्वरात् *yogeśvarāt* from the Lord of yoga कृष्णात् *kṛṣṇāt* from Krishna साक्षात् *sākṣāt* directly कथयतः *kathayataḥ* declaring स्वयम् *svayaṁ* himself

**Through the grace of Vyasa have I heard the supreme and most profound yoga direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it.** 75

The sage Vyasa blessed Sanjaya with the divine eye. The powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience came upon him as a result of this divine gift. It was therefore, possible for him to intuit all that transpired there, including the vision of the cosmic form of Iswara, that was revealed to Arjuna.

That it was a rare privilege bestowed on him is further reverently declared :—

राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम् ।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ ७६

राजन् सम्-स्मृ-त्-य संस्मृत्य सम्-वादम् इमम् अद्भुतम् ।
केशव-अर्जुनयोः पुण्यम् हृष्यामि च मुहुः मुहुः ॥

to be discounted as trifling. It is a great act when its effect is taken into consideration. Arjuna did not regain memory of his Supreme State solely through his self-effort. Sri Krishna had His part to play in this respect; and Arjuna is fully aware of it. He gives expression to his indebtedness. Rather the grace of the Lord is unparalleled. It is impossible to repay that divine act. Arjuna is fully aware of what he was before the grace descended on him and of what he is now after its benign descent. The only thing that he is capable of doing is meekly to admit that he owes his everything to the divine intervention of the Lord. The littleness of the human effort and the greatness of the grace of the Lord are lucid in the mind of Arjuna. He humbly submits that it is the grace of Sri Krishna that has made him what he is now.

*Sthitaḥ asmi*—'I am firm.' This is the third excellence come upon him by the mercy of the Lord. When a tempest and a torrential rain set in simultaneously, all trees, plants and creepers are in commotion. They are either uprooted or broken. The loss caused to them is incalculable. Even the soil that sustained them is all eroded and washed away. But a mountain remains unaffected by this catastrophe. It is firm in its place. *Brahma jñāna* makes a man firm as a rock. The one fixed in it is a *sthitaprajna*—a man of steady wisdom. Arjuna has attained that state now. Nothing on earth or in heaven can disturb his understanding. Having gained this *jñāna* once, the man of wisdom never loses it again.

wonderful हरेः *hareḥ* of Hari विस्मयः *vismayaḥ* wonder मे *me* my महान् *mahān* great राजन् *rājan* O king हृष्यामि *hṛṣyāmi* (I) rejoice च *ca* and पुनः *punaḥ* again पुनः *punaḥ* again

**And as often as I recall that most wonderous form of Hari, great is my astonishment, O king, and I rejoice again and again.** 77

It was by chance that Sanjaya was blessed with the vision of the cosmic form of the Lord, which is rare to be had even by yogis and devotees. Incidental though this vision was, it was a rare gift inducing him to the path of yoga. In fact all the *Jivatmās* are having at all times an infinitesimal aspect of the vision of the cosmic form of Iswara. But they do not know how to avail themselves of that ray of vision for further spiritual progress. Every individual can recapitulate a sublime vision of Nature, a sublime experience or a sublime state of mind, that came by him in the course of his life on earth. That divine contact is a speck of the vision of the cosmic form. By meditating on that exalted state, he can make rapid progress in his *sādhana*. The exalted vision that Sanjaya had on a macrocosmic scale is provided on a microcosmic scale to all the discerning *sadhakas*. Availing themselves of it, cogitating on it, rejoicing at it and being absorbed in it is a means of growing in yoga.

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ ७८

यत्र योग-ईश्वरः कृष्णः यत्र पार्थः धनुः-धरः ।
तत्र श्रीः वि-जयः भूतिः ध्रुवा नीतिः म(न्)-तिः मम ॥

*samjaya uvāca*

*ity aham vāsudevasya pārthasya ca mahātmanaḥ |*
*samvādam imam aśrauṣam adbhutam romaharsanam ||*

सजय उवाच *samjaya uvāca* Sanjaya said·

इति *iti* thus अहम् *aham* I वासुदेवस्य *vāsudevasya* of Vasudeva पार्थस्य *pārthasya* of Partha च *ca* and महात्मन· *mahātmanaḥ* high-souled सम्वादम् *samvādam* dialogue इमम् *imam* this अश्रौषम् *aśrausam* (I) have heard अद्भुतम् *adbhutam* wonderful रोमहर्षणम् *roma harsanam* which causes the hair to stand on end

Sanjaya said

**Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Vasudeva and the high souled Partha, causing my hair to stand on end. 74**

Excitements such as fear, joy and astonishment create horripilation Men who are perfect in body and mind are proof against fear and such negative excitements Hair standing on end due to religious fervour augurs well for the *sadhaka* Sri Krishna the speaker, Arjuna the spoken to and the matter like the Gita are bound to rouse up wonder in any intelligent hearer It is no wonder that this rare spectacle made Sanjaya's hair stand on end But history bears evidence to the fact that Dhrtarashtra remained unaffected by all these divine happenings

By mentioning Arjuna as Mahatma, the great-souled one, Sanjaya makes it plain that he and his comrades are all of the same noble calibre

A question arises as to how was it possible for Sanjaya to know of this dialogue that took place in

lives and property would be on a colossal scale. That catastrophe could be warded off by a change of attitude and a stroke of compromise. But no such wise course dawns in the mind of the unimaginative and undiscerning king. The direct action of God Himself is not understood by him.

All human endeavours ought to be in tune with the Will of the Divine, or in accordance with the Cosmic Plan. In that case the attempts would all be ethical and conducive to the progress of man. Subordinating the human will to the Divine does not mean drifting into pacifism and quietism. Activity depending on the Almighty is the right approach to life. And that is what the Pandavas did from the start to the finish. In contrast with it the Kaurava approach to life had its defects. It was all totalitarianism and defiance of the Lord Himself, not to speak of His grace. This way of life seems all prosperity at the beginning, but it ends in a tragic crash. A sound social life provides for enormous human endeavours based on dharma and faith in the Cosmic Integrity which is the *vibhūti* — glory of Iswara.

*Sri* is prosperity or Rajya Lakshmi. A vegetating earthly life unbecomes individuals as well as nations. Thriving and flourishing at all levels are the signs of robust living.

Leading the weak and helpless into captivity is no victory. It is the despotism of the demoniac. Vanquishing the wicked and taming them on the virtuous path is victory. When the undertakings of

*rājan saṁsmṛtya-saṁsmṛtya*
*saṁvādam imam adbhutam* ।
*keśavārjunayoḥ puṇyaṁ*
*hṛṣyāmi ca muhur-muhuḥ* ॥

राजन् *rājan* O king संस्मृत्य *saṁsmṛtya* having remembered संस्मृत्य *saṁsmṛtya* having remembered सम्वादम् *saṁvādaṁ* the dialogue इमम् *imam* this अद्भुतम् *adbhutaṁ* wonderful केशवार्जुनयोः *keśavārjunayoḥ* between Kesava and Arjuna पुण्यम् *puṇyaṁ* holy हृष्यामि *hṛṣyāmi* (I) rejoice च *ca* and मुहुः *muhuḥ* again मुहुः *muhuḥ* again

**O king, as I recall again and again this wonderful and holy dialogue between Kesava and Arjuna I rejoice again and again.** 76

The delight that Sanjaya enjoys indicates the sublimity of this scripture. The act of the good and the holy people getting absorbed in the study of the sacred books leads them to an ethereal bliss, which is not given to the ordinary.

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।
विस्मयो मे महान्राजन्हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥ ७७

तत् च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपम् अति-अद्भुतम् हरे ।
वि-स्मय: मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥

*tac ca saṁsmṛtya-saṁsmṛtya*
*rūpam atyadbhutaṁ hareḥ* ।
*vismayo me mahān rājan*
*hṛṣyāmi ca punaḥ-punaḥ* ॥

तत् *tat* that च *ca* and संस्मृत्य *saṁsmṛtya* having remembered संस्मृत्य *saṁsmṛtya* having remembered रूपम् *rūpaṁ* the form अत्यद्भुतम् *atyadbhutaṁ* most

glass and polished metals receive and reflect it brilliantly. Such is also the case with the brilliance of the Divine Grace. It is available to all equally and without partiality. Still It gets best reflected in the hearts of the good and the holy and best availed of by those blessed ones.

The Lord incarnates on earth for the guidance of the good, the devoted and the virtuous ones. Those apostles that accompany an Incarnation of the Divine are either the already perfected ones or those that are born for the last time before their liberation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्री महाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वणि
श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे मोक्षसंन्यासयोगो नाम
अष्टादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*iti śrī mahābhārate śatasāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣmaparvaṇi śrīmad bhagavadgītā-sūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde mokṣa saṁnyāsa yogo nāma aṣṭādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ* ||

In Sri Mahabharata consisting of a lakh of stanzas composed by Vyasa, in the section called Bhishma Parva, in the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighteenth discourse designated :

THE YOGA OF LIBERATION BY RENUNCIATION

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SRI KRISHNARPANAM

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ |*
*tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama* ||

यत्र *yatra* wherever योगेश्वर *yogeśvaraḥ* the Lord of yoga कृष्ण *kṛṣṇaḥ* Krishna यत्र *yatra* wherever पार्थ *pārthaḥ* Partha धनुर्धर *dhanurdharaḥ* the archer तत्र *tatra* there श्री *śrīḥ* prosperity विजय *vijayaḥ* victory भूति *bhūtiḥ* happiness ध्रुवा *dhruvā* firm नीति *nītiḥ* policy मति *matiḥ* conviction मम *mama* my

**Wherever is Krishna the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Partha, the wielder of the bow, there are prosperity, victory, expansion, and sound policy; such is my conviction. 78**

Though this statement belongs to Sanjaya as it ought to be, it is one of the governing principles of the Bhagavad Gita Since Sri Krishna is the Lord of Yoga, all the four *Purushārthās—dharma, artha, kāma* and *moksha* — emanate from Him Of these four, whichever comes in plenty to the *Jivatman* may be viewed as a form of yoga But *moksha* in particular is held as the goal of yoga, and it is to be obtained by the grace of the Lord. Arjuna presented in the first chapter the spectacle of having renounced his bow and arrows And it was a mark of effortlessness or of a feeble effort in life. But in this chapter he presents himself as the wielder of the bow Gandiva. The yoga power of Sri Krishna combined with the excellent manliness of Arjuna would make the impossible, possible It is at least after hearing this inevitable fact, that Dhrtarashtra ought to have changed his stubborn attitude It is certain that his sons would not be victorious in the war. Loss of

**O Earth, he who reads a quarter of a chapter, or of a stanza daily, attains to human birth throughout the duration of a Manu. 14**

गीतायाः श्लोकदशकं सप्त पञ्च चतुष्टयम् ।
द्वौ त्रीनेकं तदर्धं वा श्लोकानां यः पठेन्नरः ॥ १५
चंद्रलोकमवाप्नोति वर्षाणामयुतं ध्रुवम् ।
गीतापाठसमायुक्तो मृतो मानुषतां व्रजेत् ॥ १६

*gītāyāḥ śloka daśakaṁ sapta pañca catuṣṭayam* ।
*dvau trīnekaṁ tad ardhaṁ vā ślokānāṁ yaḥ paṭhen naraḥ* ॥
*candralokam avāpnoti varṣāṇāmayutaṁ dhruvam* ।
*gītāpāṭha samāyukto mṛto mānuṣatāṁ vrajet* ॥

**The man who recites ten, seven, five, four, three or two stanzas, or even one or half a stanza of the Gita, certainly lives in Chandraloka for ten thousand years. He who leaves the body while reading the Gita, obtains the region of man. 15-16**

गीताभ्यासं पुनः कृत्वा लभते मुक्तिमुत्तमाम् ।
गीतेत्युच्चारसंयुक्तो म्रियमाणो गतिं लभेत् ॥ १७

*gītā 'bhyāsaṁ punaḥ kṛtvā labhate muktim uttamām* ।
*gītetyuccāra saṁyukto mriyamāṇo gatiṁ labhet* ॥

**Again, practising the Gita, man attains supreme Mukti. The dying man uttering the word "Gita" will attain the goal. 17**

गीतार्थश्रवणाऽऽसक्तो महापापयुतोऽपि वा ।
वैकुण्ठं समवाप्नोति विष्णुना सह मोदते ॥ १८

*gītā 'rtha śravaṇā 'sakto mahāpāpayuto 'pi vā* ।
*vaikuṇṭhaṁ samavā 'pnoti viṣṇunā saha modate* ॥

**Even he who has committed heinous sins goes to Vaikuntha and lives in communion with Vishnu if he loves to hear the meaning of the Gita. 18**

गीतार्थं ध्यायते नित्यं कृत्वा कर्माणि भूरिशः ।
जीवन्मुक्तः स विज्ञेयो देहान्ते परमं पदम् ॥ १९

*gitā 'rtham dhyāyate nityam kṛtvā karmāni bhūriśaḥ ।*
*jīvan muktaḥ sa vijñeyo dehānte paramam padam ॥*

**He is to be regarded a Jivanmukta who constantly meditates on the meaning of the Gita in the midst of performing his karma without respite. He attains the supreme state at the fall of his body. 19**

गीतामाश्रित्य बहवो भूभुजो जनकादयः ।
निर्धूतकल्मषा लोके गीता याताः परं पदम् ॥ २०

*gītām āśritya bahavo bhūbhujo janakādayah ।*
*nirdhūta kalmaṣā loke gitā yātāḥ param padam ॥*

**Many kings like Janaka became free from evils and attained the highest state by following this Gita. So is it eulogized. 20**

गीतायाः पठनं कृत्वा माहात्म्यं नैव यः पठेत् ।
वृथा पाठो भवेत्तस्य श्रम एव ह्युदाहृतः ॥ २१

*gītāyāh pathanam kṛtvā māhātmyam naiva yaḥ pathet ।*
*vṛthā pāṭho bhavet tasya śrama eva hy udāhṛtaḥ ॥*

**His reading is in vain and his effort is wasted who does not read this *Māhātmyam* after having completed the reading of the Gita. 21**

एतन्माहात्म्यसंयुक्तं गीताभ्यासं करोति यः ।
स तत्फलमवाप्नोति दुर्लभां गतिमाप्नुयात् ॥ २२

*etan māhātmya saṁyuktaṁ*
*gītā 'bhyāsaṁ karoti yaḥ* ।
*sa tat phalam avāpnoti durlabhāṁ*
*gatim āpnuyāt* ॥

**He who studies the Gita together with this discourse on its Mahatmyam gets the fruit stated herein, and reaches that goal which is rare to attain.**

सूत उवाच
माहात्म्यमेतद्गीताया मया प्रोक्तं सनातनम् ।
गीतान्ते च पठेद्यस्तु यदुक्तं तत्फलं लभेत् ॥ २३ -

*sūta uvāca*
*māhātmyam etad gītāyā mayā proktaṁ sanātanam* ।
*gītā 'nte ca paṭhedyas tu yad uktaṁ tat phalaṁ labhet* ॥

Suta said:

**He who reads this eternal greatness of the Gita, declared by me, after reading the Gita, will obtain the reward described herein. 23**

These utterances may seem somewhat fantastic if not ridiculous to a critical student. But the spirit behind them requires to be imbibed. As the food for the body is supplied daily according to one's power of assimilation, spiritual food also requires to be provided in tune with the earnestness, capacity and attainments of the aspirant. There is no such thing as overdose in spiritual matters. One makes progress in proportion to one's application to the study and practice of the principles contained in this book.

इति श्रीवाराहपुराणे श्रीगीतामाहात्म्यं सम्पूर्णम् ।
*iti śrī vārāha purāṇe śrī gītā māhātmyaṁ sampūrṇam* ।
Thus concludes in the Varaha Purana the discourse designated:

THE GREATNESS OF THE GITA

# THE BHAGAVAD GITA

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# INDEX TO TOPICS

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## THE APPELLATIONS OF ARJUNA

### AS DEFINED IN THE GITA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Anagha | — | the sinless one. |
| Arjuna | — | the pure in nature. |
| Bharatarishabha | — | the best of the Bharatas. |
| Bharatasattama | — | ,, |
| Bharatasreshta | — | ,, |
| Dhananjaya | — | the conqueror of wealth |
| Gudakesa | — | the conqueror of sleep. |
| Kapidhvaja | — | he whose ensign is a monkey. |
| Kaunteya | — | the son of Kunti |
| Kiriti | — | he who wears a diadem. |
| Kurunandana | — | the joy of the Kurus. |
| Kurusreshta | — | the best of the Kurus. |
| Mahabahu | — | the mighty-armed. |
| Pandava | — | the son of Pandu |
| Partha | — | the son of Pritha, Kunti. |
| Parantapa | — | the scorcher of foes |
| Purushavyaghra | — | the tiger of men. |
| Savyasachin | — | one who could shoot arrows with the left hand also. |

# THE NAMES OF SRI KRISHNA

EMPLOYED IN THE GITA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Achyuta | — | He who does not deviate fro His divine nature. |
| Arisudana | — | He who destroys the enemies. |
| Bhagavan | — | He who is endowed with powe virtue, fame, glory, detachme and freedom. |
| Govinda | — | The knower of the Jivatman. |
| Hrishikesa | — | The Lord of the senses. |
| Jagannivasa | — | The abode of the universe. |
| Janardana | — | He who is adored by devo for the fulfilment of their desi |
| Kesava | — | He who has beautiful hair. T Lord of the Trinity. |
| Kesinisudana | — | He who slaughtered Kesin. |
| Krishna | — | The dark one.<br>The remover of sin.<br>He who is Brahman. |
| Madhava | — | The Lord of Lakshmi. |
| Madhusudana | — | He who destroyed the demon named Madhu. |
| Purushottama | — | The Supreme Person. |
| Varshneya | — | He who belongs to the Vrshni clan. |
| Vasudeva | — | The son of Vasudeva.<br>The Immanent in all. |
| Vishnu | — | The all pervading One. |
| Yadava | — | He who comes of the Yadu clan. |
| Yogeswara | — | The Lord of Yoga. |

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA TAPOVANAM

## TIRUPPARAITTURAI

### TIRUCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT

South India

**Location:** The Tapovanam is situated nine miles to the west of Tiruchirappalli on the southern bank of the sacred Akhanda Kaveri. Elamanur is its railway station.

**Ideal:** Spiritual life as exemplified by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda is its ideal and its practice.

**Management:** The Tapovanam is a registered society having Sannyasins and Brahmacharis as its main office-bearers. Swami Chidbhavananda is its president.

**Activities:** Spiritual ministry is done in several ways. Antaryoga or spiritual retreat for the benefit of the public is periodically conducted at the Tapovanam and at several other places including Madras and Bangalore. Spiritual literature in Tamil and in English are released from the Tapovanam. A Tamil monthly called "Dharma Chakram" goes out from here.

The Tapovanam has its branches at Tiruvedakam in Madurai Dt., Chitrachavadi in Coimbatore Dt., Courtallam in Tirunelveli Dt. and at Salem.

Sri Sarada College for Women and its limb Institutions at Salem are under the presidentship of Swami Chidbhavananda.

**Residential High School:** The Tapovanam runs a Gurukula pattern Residential High School for 520 boys. It functions on the public school model.

**Residential College:** The Tapovanam runs a Gurukula pattern Residential College at Tiruvedakam near Madurai. It is affiliated to the University of Madurai.

**Farms:** The Tapovanam owns Agricultural Farms and Dairy Farms both at Tirupparaitturai and at Tiruvedakam.

For further particulars please correspond with the Secretary.